

JOURNAL ·
OF
FIVE MONTHS' RESIDENCE,
IN
The Mauritius,


BY
A BENGAL CIVILIAN.

"I love France so well, that I will not part with a village of it." I will
have it all mine."

"HENRY 5TH," SHAKESPEARE.

CALCUTTA :
Printed by Samuel Smith and Co., No. 1, Hare-street.

1838.

INTRODUCTION.

It is incumbent on the author to observe, that this "Journal of the Mauritius" originally appeared, in detached portions, in the columns of the "*Literary Gazette*." The accident of numerous errors in the earlier edition, coupled with the partial persuasion of a friend, have induced the author to republish the "Diary" in its present integral form. The grammatical errors of the former, have been corrected in the present publication; one or two digressions have been omitted, some idiomatic redundancies curtailed, and, in rare instances, the structure of a sentence has been modified, the writer hopes for the better. *Au reste* the Journal remains essentially unaltered.

The author had directed, that the remarks on the "Affranchis" of the Mauritius, which occupy the first six and twenty pages of the pamphlet, should be disjoined from the "Journal" and inserted in the form of a supplementary chapter; unfortunately his wish was misunderstood or lost sight of by the inspector of the Press, and he is now constrained to solicit the reader's indulgence for their unmeaning incorporation.



A JOURNAL
OF
THE MAURITIUS.

It was towards the close of the year 1835, after nearly six months' residence in the "Mauritius," that I drew up the following slight sketch of the "noirs" of the island in their then state of apprenticeship, and their apparent qualifications for the unlimited emancipation into which they were about to be ushered. The opinions I have formed of this class, whether accurate or not, are, at least, the sincere, deliberate result of my individual observation, supported by the collective experience of many residents on the island. It would be disingenuous to affirm, that I arrived in the "Mauritius" with a mind wholly unbiassed on this interesting question.

From early youth a warm admirer of Fox and Wilberforce, and one to whom the very term of slavery was instantaneously suggestive of the enchaining eloquence of St. Pierre, and the contagious pathos of Sterne, I can scarcely be said to have sat down an unprepossessed judge on a cause, in which bondage and freedom, the slave-owner and his transferable human

stock, were brought into antagonism. Should the result of my observation, then, seem to any one unwarrantably indulgent to the planter and severe to the noir, let him, at least, do me the justice of recollecting, that I had to rid myself of a prior prepossession in favour of the negroes, ere I could calmly and impartially adjust the conflicting merits of the question. For some period antecedent to my arrival in the island, the new institution of "apprentissage" had replaced the ancient system of slavery, and the arbitrary power of punishment, before vested in the proprietor, had been completely annulled; while the "judge special," an officer of new creation, was appointed to hear and decide on the complaints of the "apprentis" against his master, as also of the master against his "apprentis." The irregularities of the planter and the delinquencies of the noir, were thus subjected to the same tribunal, and conviction was followed by a proportionate punishment to the guilty.

That the "habitans" should have regarded this new court, which arrogated to itself the privileges they had once enjoyed, with jealousy and alienation, is, at least, natural; but that it should have been on the whole distasteful to the negroes, for whose peculiar favour and convenience it was instituted, may seem unaccountable,—but is not the less an indisputable fact. This is owing to the greater severity of the punishment awarded by the magistrate than that formerly inflicted by the proprietor, for offences of the same degree.

It is notorious that the punishment a slave formerly incurred from his master for a grave felony, was little severer than that inflicted by an European pedagogue on a truant school-boy. To illustrate what I believe to be the prevailing feeling of the "apprentis" on this subject, I shall insert, verbatim, a fragment of a

dialogue between two negro-women, as overheard and reported to me by an English gentleman, long resident in the island:—"Fine times these" commenced one. "Now, if we are impudent—give mauvais raisons to our mistresses, we are punished more severely than formerly when convicted of a theft. I was impertinent to my mistress, a few days ago, and she sent me before the magistrate, by whom I was sentenced to a fortnight's imprisonment. When I was released from prison, and sent back to my mistress, I said to her, when next I am impudent, beat me, then we shall be quits, but don't send me again before the magistrate; there you have it all your own way and I am the only sufferer."

Yet the transition state of "apprentissage," must be regarded on the whole as a very imperfect preparative for the rights of citizenship. Still residing on their camps in the proprietor's estate, still exchanging the product of their daily labour for the accustomed rations and wages, still tended when sick by the district surgeon, not to omit the imperious influence of habit, I feel convinced that by far the greater proportion of the negroes recognize no essential difference in their present condition as "apprentis," and their former as slaves. In point of physical comfort and accommodation, their condition, as compared with that of a large proportion of our agricultural labourers and artisans, is enviable indeed. The sleek appearance, and gay "insouciance" of the majority of the "apprentis," suggest a natural and vivid contrast with the disease, dejection and misery so widely impressed on the population of our manufacturing towns, and make one feel more sensibly the touching truth contained in Lord Brougham's ironical admission:—"The consistent friend of humanity may be permitted to feel some tenderness for his European

brethren, although they are white and civilized." That a surplus remains to the negroes above what is necessary for their subsistence, is manifest from the personal property in the shape of furniture, &c., that many of them accumulate in their huts, from the livestock, such as pigs, poultry, and pigeons, that they are enabled to rear, as also from the costly "material" of which the negresses' dresses are frequently composed, and the rings, bracelets, &c., with which they decorate themselves.

That the expensive tastes of the African beauty, are often supplied from other funds than those of the husband, I am perfectly aware; yet if it be shown that Cæsar Borgia has presented Diana, the spouse of Adrian, with a tortoiseshell comb, while Adrian has won the good graces of Isidora, the wife of Cæsar Borgia, with a coral negligee, the same conclusion will be arrived at as if the toilet and bijouterie of both negresses had been supplied from the pin-money allowed them by their husbands.

The two most predominant features in the character of the Mauritius negro, are idleness and dishonesty.

I need not the support of such authorities as Buffon and Montesquieu, to fortify my assertion, that all men are inclined to idleness; that the natives of the torrid zone are more peculiarly susceptible of its influence, and that its sway is most intensely felt amongst the inhabitants of a tropical country, who have not yet emerged from barbarism. The latter is precisely the state of those African countries, which have constituted for three centuries the "*officina servorum*" to civilized Europe. Some have thought that the negro's innate aversion to labour, has been strengthened by the compulsory labour to which he has been subjected in slavery; yet this opinion is rather

invalidated by the notorious idleness of the enfranchised of the Mauritius, as also of Si rra Leone.

Mr. Ludlam, governor of Si rra Leone, after eight years' residence in the country, records his opinion of the affranchis, in the following unequivocal language : "no visible effect has taken place in consequence of the abolition; except that it has added to the natural indolence of the native." That the vices observable in the blacks of the Mauritius, to which may be added a sanguinary ferocity, are common to the African in his indigenous barbarism, and not deducible from colonial slavery, is evidenced by the coinciding statements of travellers, governors, and envoys, who have visited the independent states of Western Africa. In a letter from an English officer from Cape Coast Castle, in the year 1815, there occurs the following forcible observation :—"A state of society more miserably dismembered, and in which the elements seem less capable of combination, can scarcely be imagined. Europe might be rebarbarized, before Africa could civilize herself." The pages of Barbot, de Maria, Francis Moore, Dalziel, and others, abound with repulsive anecdotes, and harrowing details of the dishonesty, cruelty, and perfidy of the indigenous African. But I abstain from pursuing this branch of inquiry, having merely proposed to myself to describe the "apprentis" of the Mauritius, not the aboriginal free savage of the continent. The nonchalance and reluctance with which the "apprentis" almost invariably labour, must strike the most superficial observer. Whether the stable, the workshop, or the cane field be the scene of his exertions, it is evident that there are two strong inherent principles warring in his breast, the love of indolence and the dread of chastisement.

The following are a few out of numerous instances

of negro idleness, extracted from a pamphlet on the "affranchis" of the Mauritius, by a Monsieur Bernard. The author is a planter, and the theory which he endeavours to support, will be met by the trite, though not powerless, *vous etes un orfevre joue*. The facts which he details, however, are incontrovertible, and strictly harmonise with others of a similar tone, which have been furnished me as well by the non-proprietor as the proprietor of slaves, the adherent of the Jeremie as of the D'Epinay faction.

" Il y a des noirs qu 'on n' a jamais pu attacher au travail. On avoit un esclave, qui dans l'espace de 27 ans n' a pas travaillé 18 mois pour son maître. A peine rentré d'uné marronnage de plusieurs mois, il repartait, allait défoncer quelque case, volait des vivres, des volailles, des effets tout ce qu'il pouvait trouver, à sa convenance ; et pour couronner l'œuvre, il se rendit au bureau du Protecteur, et là débitait contre lui les calomnies les plus affreuses.

Dernierement ce misérable revient, d' un long marronnage.

" Ah, te voilà, lui dit son maître, eh ! bien mon Garçon, que veux tu que je fasse de toi ! quelle a été ta conduite jusqu' à présent ? Quels services m' as tu rendus depuis 27 ans que tu m' appartiens ? et pourtant quels reproches as tu à me faire ? " " Vous avez raison Monsieur, reprend le noir, je n'ai pas à me plaindre de vous ; c'est moi qui suis un grand coquin, un grand scélérat, et je suis moi-même étonné que vous avez souffert aussi patiemment tout ce que je vous ai fait. Si vous aviez été un autre maître, il y'a long temps que vous m' auriez... un coup de fusil, car je l'ai bien mérité." " Mais puisque tu conviens que tu t'es si mal conduit, comment as-tu pu aller porter tant des plaintes contre moi à la police, et chez

M. Thomas ?” “ Je n'en sais rien. Que voulez vous que je vous dise ?.... Je crois qu'il y a un diable qui me pousse à faire tout ça.” Ces aveux étaient le chant de cygne. Le malheureux va trouver Madame M., lui demande un livre de riz, parceque, dit-il, il ne peut pas, on ne veut pas manger de maniac, recoit son riz, quitte de nouveau la cour de son maître, et meurt cinq ou six jours après, chez l'assistant Protecteur. Ce noir, pendant sa vie, avait manqué à tous les devoirs : il avait fait peut être mille vols dont quelques-uns assez considerables, puisqu'il avait enlevé jusqu' à des bœufs : il avait porté contre son maître les plaintes les plus calomnieuses. En France ou en Angleterre, il fût sans doute mort au bagne ou sur l'échafaud. “ Un tel jour, disait l'autre jour une dame à son domestique noir de Gouvernement, je vais, à la campagne, vous me rejoindrez demain à C. car j'aurai besoin de vous.”—“ Non Madame !—Comment ! non et pourquoi ?” “ Parcequ, il ne me plait pas de quitter la ville.”—“ Eh bien, dans mon absence, vous ferez telle chose.”—“ Non, vous allez prendre vos plaisirs à la campagne, et moi aussi je veux me promener pendant que vous ne serez pas ici.”—“ Mais vous êtes un impertinent : je vous ferai punir.”—Vous m'en avez déjà fait punir ; qu'y avez vous gagné. En êtes vous mieux servie, &c.” Et le noir n' a point été rejoindre sa maîtresse, et le noir a fait ce qu'il a voulu.

Un des plus grandes plaisirs des noirs, c'est d'avoir toujours du feu dans leurs cases, qu' il fasse chaud, qu'il fasse froid, s'asseoir auprès de quelques tisons est pour eux un besoin, pour ainsi dire de première nécessité. On serait naturellement porté à croire que pour satisfaire ce besoin impérieux aucune peine doit

leur coûter rien ; ainsi on pensera que l'esclave doit profiter avec empressement de ses heures de loisir pour aller chercher le bois qu'il devra consommer dans la soirée. Mais la prévoyance est encore une de ces vertus que les noirs ignorent entièrement : Ils ramassent à la vérité les morceaux de bois qu'ils trouvent sous la main en travaillant pour leur maître : mais s'il faut qu'ils aillent un peu loin pour s'en procurer, ils ne feront pas le sacrifice de quelques uns de leurs momens d'oisiveté, dussent-ils en souffrir. Cependant la nuit venue, ils sont sensibles à cette privation, de feu et surtout de la fumée. Ils font alors quelques efforts pour trouver des combustibles, dans ces instans tout leur est bon, et le bois, qu'ils peuvent obtenir sans peine devient bientôt la proie des flammes : la charpente d'une maison, d'un pavillon, que l'on aura déposée pres de leur case, le manche d'un instrument aratoire, des parties de meubles même, rien n'est sacré pour eux. Ils ne pourraient ni causer ni dormir, s'ils n'étaient environnés d'un épais nuage de fumée. On a vu des noirs habitant la campagne auprès d'un verger, d'une forêt, ou d'une terre en jachère, faire brûler les matériaux, qui composaient leur case, plutôt que de se donner la peine d'aller à quelques pas de leur demeure chercher du bois de chauffage qu'ils pouvaient trouver facilement.

The innate dishonesty of the aboriginal African, so far from degenerating, has sprouted into ranker luxuriance under the shade of colonial civilization ; nor can this be matter of surprise to one who considers the character of the change which has resulted from their connexion with European masters. While their intellectual capacities have remained uninformed, and their

crude moral notions uncorrected, they have simultaneously acquired a taste for the luxuries and physical accommodations of civilization, and a cunning and adroitness which qualify them for excellence in the pursuits of illicit appropriation. They possess at least one point of analogy with the persuasive orator of Pandemonium ;

" To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful."

Let not the reader imagine that their thieving exploits are confined to the timid and occasional abstraction of provisions, and necessaries, and the commission of single-handed larcenies. Oh, no! the infirmity of noble minds induces them to spurn so ignoble an arena. Specie, plate, the bureau, and the "cassette," excite and reward their aspiring audacity; and in gangs of twenty and thirty, they have broken into extensive premises at night; and, in an incalculably short period, disembowelled them of every thing not utterly worthless. For myself, I was so fortunate, although keeping house in the country for five months, to escape with the loss of a few articles of saddlery. I must allow that my groom, who was the delinquent, was the only negro on my establishment. I dismissed him from my service for incorrigible carelessness and remissness, and, being of an affectionate disposition, he took away with him, merely as a "souvenir," two bridles, one or two horse blankets, and other stable gear. Some friends of mine, who were keeping house conjointly in Port Louis, were far from being so fortunate. Two of their domestics, one of the name of "Eveille," (the smartest and most intelligent creole servant I have seen in the island, and who would have been a promising pupil of the immortal "Scapin") had been

detected in a deep laid consecutive system of promiscuous robbery from wardrobe, store-room and cellar, by means of master-keys. They were apprehended, tried, convicted, and sentenced to a long imprisonment, but not a particle of the stolen property had been recovered prior to my departure from the island. Port Louis, I may here observe, in the number of receiving houses for stolen goods that it contains, holds out tempting facilities to the commission, and no less formidable impediments to the detection of theft. Dishonesty is not confined to the adult blacks. At the early age of three and four, some of the negro children manifest "d'immenses dispositions" for the act of appropriation; and the effrontery with which they will deny the charge, when all but taken in the theft, would tax the penetration of the most experienced advocate, even of him who has been accustomed to cross-question alibi witnesses on the Irish southern circuit. The following anecdote of juvenile depravity is extracted from Monsieur Bernard's work :

"Un jeune domestique de 8 or 9 ans vole une paire de boucles d'oreilles à sa petite maitresse. Tout portait à croire qu'il était le coupable: car les boucles étaient là, il n'y a que quelques minutes, et lui seul est entré dans l'appartement. On le questionne, on lui promet qu'il ne lui arrivera rien, s'il rend les objets: il soutient avec assurance qu'il n'a pas vu les boucles, qu'il ne sait ce qu'on veut lui dire.

Il fait des sermens, il prend le bon dieu à témoin de son innocence; on serait vraiment tenté de croire qu'il est accusé injustement.

Mais le maître arrive; on lui raconte le fait. Le maître qui ne veut pas que de semblables objets se

perdent chez lui, et surtout qu'il y a il des voleurs parmi ses domestiques, interroge le petit noir, l'intimide, le menace ; mêmes réponses de la part de celui-ci ; memes denegations, mêmes sermens sur la tête de son pere, de sa mère. Enfin le maitre s'empare d'un martinet, il va frapper, le petit voleur rend les anneaux.

Lying, and ingratitude are also prominent traits in the "noir" of the Mauritius. The former may be regarded as the almost necessary sequence of their idleness and dishonesty. Their social position is indeed eminently calculated to foster this vice. Ever self-conscious of sins as well of commission as omission, and by consequence apprehensive of merited punishment, when interrogated on any subject, they shelter themselves, if possible, in utter ignorance. If charged of any speech, or action, whether praise-worthy, indifferent, or improper, they deny it plumply, on some rare occasions depriving themselves of a just approbation, but far more frequently evading a deserved chastisement. Finding that they are on the whole the gainers by this line of conduct, i.e. that by denying what is, they generally succeed in screening their derelictions—by a jump—which, to a negro intellect, is by no means a despicable one ; they venture to put to the test the expediency of the converse rule, affirming what is not until they at length become on all occasions habitual, and gratuitous perverters of the truth. As for the sentiment of gratitude, it is almost an exotic in negro bosoms. The marl which encumbers but enriches not the barren moor—the blessed rains of heaven, which water, but do not fertilize the desert lands, are but too apt similitudes of the charity, kindness, and tenderness, which in many signal instances

have been idly lavished on the members of this thankless race. The following anecdote from Monsieur Bernard's work is a striking illustration of what I have advanced :—" Monsieur, T. avait reçu en cadeau d'une tante qu'il aimait beaucoup, un jeune noir domestique fort intelligent ; il avait pour ce noir des attentions, des égards, que l'on n'a certainement pas, en Europe pour les domestiques ; il poussait la complaisance jusqu'à vouloir qu'il fut toujours vêtu aussi proprement que peut l'être un personne libre, et tous les dimanches il lui donnait quelque argent.

Ce mauvais sujet, peu sensible aux bontés de son maître, l'en payait par de l'ingratitude : chaque jour il lui faisait des vols plus ou moins considérables à l'aide de fausses clés qu'il s'était procurés. Ce noir le fait une blessure ; il est pris du tétanos. Pendant quarante cinq jours que dure sa maladie, on lui prodigue les soins les plus assidus ; ce sont ses maîtres eux-mêmes qui le violent, qui pansent sa plaie ; qui lui font prendre des potions. Enfin il se rétablit après avoir coûté à M. T. en frais de médecin et en médicaments environ 150 piastres.

Dès que ce noir peut marcher, il demande à sa maîtresse une piastre pour faire dire une messe en actions de grâces, et remercier Dieu de sa guérison. On lui donne cette piastre : il se rend en effet à l'église, entend la messe dite à son intention ; mais à peine sorti de la maison de Dieu, à peine arrivé chez son maître, il vole deux bouteilles de vin. On peut raisonnablement supposer que ce noir ne se fût pas fait scrupule de commettre un vol plus considérable, s'il en avait trouvé l'occasion. Le malheureux, il échappait des bras de la mort, et il venait de remercier Dieu de son retour à

a santé. "Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret."

Such being the prevailing moral features of the men, it would be unreasonable to look for decency, far less "virtue's painful endeavour," amongst the women, or, as Mrs. Trollope would designate them, "the females of sable family." From early youth the negresses abandon themselves to the most shameless sensuality. Concubinage (this may be partially referable to the numerical disparity between the sexes, the proportion of women to men being only as 60 to 100) is fearfully prevalent and leads to that lesser species of infanticide, the procuring of abortions by self-administered drugs. It is impossible to overlook the fact that public opinion is utterly powerless amongst the "noirs," and that the most glaring and convicted criminality on the part of the negro, and the most systematic, and unblushing licentiousness on the part of the negress, in no degree detract from their consideration in the eyes of their comrades. To pass from the graver to the lighter traits in the negro character, they are generally distinguished by an animal hilarity and good-humoured levity, the result of climate and physical temperament, which is, at first sight, prepossessing. The "naïveté" of their expressions, the suavity of their tones, and a superficial polish of manner, are more or less attractive to the stranger. Those qualities are more peculiarly characteristic of the blacks born in the island, the creole "noirs," who comprize nearly all the household servants, and possess far more intelligence and address than the "Caffres" and "Malgaches." A bright sky, transparent air, and a temperature bland for an intertropical one, would seem to exercise an auspicious influence over all cradled in this charming island;

some time before I became entirely familiarized to the classical, romantic, grandiloquent names, which are almost invariably conferred on the blacks, or could view without ludicrous associations, a "Maria Theresa" carrying eggs or plaintains to market, a hobbledehoy "Numa Pompilius" escorting a dowager sow from the country, a Venus personified in an aged, hunch-backed, obi-like looking hag, and an "Adonis," no counterpart of him

"Bewailed in amorous ditties all a summer's day,"

but approximating in face and form to Arnold the deformed before his transformation, or the ineffably hideous Afrite Sorcerer of Vathek. I have given the creole "noir" the preference on the score of intelligence over the "Africans" and "Malgaches." The "Africans," who possess a more vigorous conformation than the two other branches of the sable family, are best adapted for, and almost universally employed in agricultural labours. Unlike the vain creoles, they are careless to a fault on the article of dress; their huts are destitute of the commonest conveniences; they are as *clarty* in their habits as the cottagers of Glenburnie, and very generally addicted to drunkenness. Low in the scale of humanity as are the aborigines of New Holland, it is but a thin partition, which separates them from the African "apprentis."

When they have completed their automatic labours, they either bask in the sun or crouch together in the smoke-misty atmosphere of their huts. That they have souls, I believe as firmly as uncle Toby did, but assuredly they are such as "can scarce ferment their mass of clay." The half reasoning elephant, standing under the shade of the rustling peepul, and fanning his languid forehead with a plaintain leaf, indolent, yet

restless in his indolence, will even to an unfanciful view, convey the impression of an "ennuye;" but who would suspect that that dreadful yawn which, sleep cannot abate, had ever irritated the drowsy duck-weed stagnation of the Caffre's existence. The "Malgaches," if inferior to the creole in intelligence, are apter and more ingenious than the "Africans." They have more taste than the latter for the conveniences of life, and amongst this class are to be found the best island mechanics, carpenters, blacksmiths, &c. The intercourse of these three species has, in some degree, modified their distinctive habits, and tastes, as, for instance, the creole has acquired the language and national dance of the African, and has imparted to him in return, his proper "patois," and the music of Europe; but the leading characteristics of their disposition have been affected to no material extent. I now proceed to review the condition and character of those negroes in the "Mauritius," who have been admitted to the full privileges of liberty.

The radical vices of the "noir," indolence and dishonesty, are even more pronounced in this class than amongst the "apprentis."

It is rarely that any cultivated land is seen in the vicinity of an affranchis' hut, or live-stock, such as sheep and cows; in either case, it may be safely inferred that the "affranchis" possesses one or more slaves.

If asked, says Monsieur Bernard, why he leaves his land uncultivated and does not endeavour to better the condition of his family, he will answer you that "il n'a pas des forces," meaning slaves; so inseparable in his idea is the connexion between servitude and labour.

How then, it will be naturally demanded, do they subsist?

Some employ themselves as fishermen; others support themselves by casual voyages as sailors; some work as carpenters, masons, and blacksmiths, but having accumulated a small sum, remain idle till the spur of necessity obliges them to resume their abandoned occupations. A large proportion, however, with a perverted pride, condemn not only the subject of compulsory labour, but even Europeans, who hold domestic offices, or exercise a manual calling, become themselves to the camp of the planter, and are not ashamed to sponge upon their unemancipated relations. But the profession which holds out most charms to them, is that of the unlicensed dealer. These are the owners of the shops for receiving stolen goods in Port Louis, Mablebourg, Flacque, &c. Such a state of things in any other country, would argue a criminal remissness on the part of the police; but here, where by far the greater portion of the slaves, constituting nearly three-fourths of the population, are occasional, if not systematic thieves, and the unsuspected and trusted are generally in collusion with the plunderers, the difficulties thrown in the way of detection are almost insurmountable. I am sure, at least, that the epic invention, lynx-eyed penetration, and blood-hound pertinacity of "Vidocque," would find an arduous and worthy arena in the capital of the Mauritius. The following are extracted from Monsieur Bernard's "Essay." "Un gentilhomme Anglais offrait, il y a quelques jours, 10 ou 12 piastres par mois a un nouvel affranchis qu'il voulait avoir pour domestique." "Vous

me servirez chez moi," disait-il, "à cet homme" "et lorsqu'il m' arrivera de m'absenter pour un ou deux jours, vous me suivrez, et vous porterez ma petite valise. Je porterai votre valise ! répond L' Affranchis ; non Monsieur, je suis libre, moi, je ne suis pas fait pour porter une valise."

Un habitant de mes amis me disait : "J' ai chez moi un affranchis pour surveiller mes noirs : cet homme se croiyait deshonoré, si dans le moment le plus urgent, il mettrait une seule fois la main a l'œuvre. Quelquefois pour lui prouver que le travail ne saurait avilir l'homme libre, je me mêle a mes noirs, et je travaille comme eux. Ce malheureux sent tout le ridicule de sa position, il hésite : il ne sait s'il doit ou non suivre l'exemple que je lui donne ; enfin son orgueil et la paresse cedent ; mais ce n'est que pour un moment ; a peine l' ai je perdu de vue qu' il quitte l' ouvrage."*

If such be the condition of the comparatively small portion already enfranchised, it is surely natural to look forward with distrust and foreboding to emancipation, breaking in its first flush on the slaves of the "Mauritius." Is it possible that the most bigotted disciple of the optimist school, can anticipate that improving prospect, nor view some shadows of doubt and apprehension stealing over the sunny beauty of his ideal landscape? Are they, I ask, fit subjects

* It would be uncandid in me to conceal, that there have been, and now are, a few splendid exceptions to the dark and forbidding portrait I have sketched of the Mauritius "noir ;" men whose benevolence, honesty, and affectionate attachment, show that education and circumstances are not all powerful, and that every where, "the mind is its own place." My remarks apply to the blacks in general, not to the isolated exceptions "*Quibus meliore luto finxit præcordia Titan.*"

for the precious, but in this instance perilous, boon of independence, who, so far from being qualified to make a right use of the inestimable privilege, are literally unable to comprehend the meaning and force of the term? Slavery and labour are so inextricably interwoven in their imaginations that they cannot conceive the co-existence of freedom and occupation; and the images, if any, which liberty suggests to their minds, are those of a sleeping, smoking, drony existence, interspersed with fits of revelry and riot.

It is a fact "notorious, as the sun at noon day," that were the alternative of a state of slavery, if such were possible, involving utter cessation from labour, and of freedom conjoined, with daily employment, presented to their choice, nineteen-twentieths would embrace the former. I confess that for my own part, I regard the abrupt and unreserved emancipation of the blacks, with emotions analogous to those I should feel were the cells and gates of a populous bedlam suddenly thrown open, and the hallucinated inhabitants liberated from darkness and restraint. I am not one of the corps of alarmists, and my apprehensions in both cases, would have reference rather to the enfranchised maniacs and slaves, than the sane, and ever-free members of the community.

To remove the control and dependence which habit has made a second nature to the negro, appears to me a procedure of the same equivocal sagacity, as the suddenly depriving a rheumatic patient of his accustomed crutches, and requiring him to walk, or an inveterate opium-eater of his daily drug, and demanding of him his usual liveliness and hilarity. What then,

will be the probable conduct of the numerous black population of the "Mauritius;" when going to bed, slaves at night, they awake in the morning free-men? Is it reasonable to expect that, indolent as they are, childishly reckless of the future, and intoxicated with misty notions of their new-found independence, they will, after two or three self-conferred holidays, when the ebullition of their delirium has subsided, tranquilly and regularly resume as free-labourers, the employments they had exercised in a state of bondage? Philanthropic credulity may hug itself with the belief, that from the ashes of ancient slavery, the young Phoenix of liberty may arise full-grown and full-fledged, and vigorous of opinion, to cleave the limitless azure in his triumphant career, but the calmer anticipations of a distrustful experience may, perhaps, recognize the apparition of a midnight, mousing, owl, snatched from her "ancient solitary" tower, and let loose, a purblind, pitiable, and persecuted thing, amidst the rejoicing songsters, and meridian splendour of a summer sky.

But, assuredly, it requires not the gift of prophecy to foretell, that by far the greater proportion of the "apprentis" on attaining emancipation, will immediately withdraw their labour from the market, and live unproductive "faincares," till the whole of their earned or pilfered funds are consumed. Such an event occurring during the sugar season, would be fatal to the planter.

The evil has been apprehended, and may be, in a partial, degree provided for, by the import of labourers from India. Two thousand of the Dangga caste have,

I hear, been already transplanted into the island, and the demand for them still increases. Their subsistence costs a third less than that of the "African," and if not quite so athletic as the "Caffres," they are infinitely more willing and docile. Habit, too, may be expected to increase their efficiency in the plantations. Should this remedy, however, be inadequate to meet the consequences of emancipation, the prospects of the "Mauritius" are, indeed, dark and unpromising. What a vista of poverty, distress, folly, and crime, will then be revealed in that earthly Paradise! And what, it may be asked, are the feelings with which the planters project their thoughts into the near future? But before I reply to this question, as being in some measure relevant to the present subject, I shall not omit the opportunity of briefly recording any opinion on a respectable and calumniated body of men. I will concede to "Sterne," that "slavery is a bitter draught." I will admit that "St. Pierre" may have sketched from the life the planter of the Black River, to whom, in his exquisite romance, he has conferred a gloomy immortality; that it is even possible that two or three such may exist at the present moment, whose evil energies have, happily for their dependents, been fettered by the late measure of "apprentissage;" but that such monsters should have been received, and accredited as specimens of a whole class, is a crying injustice. With a few exceptions, the planters of the "Mauritius" have treated their slaves with humanity, consideration and indulgence, and necessarily, if report speaks true, present a very striking contrast to their West Indian brotherhood.

They are, moreover, generally domestic in their habits, given to hospitality, good humored and agreeable members of the social circle, shrewd and acute, and not rarely imbued with a love of literature and science. It is with alacrity that I here express my grateful sense of the kind attentions, and unostentatious heartiness of reception, that I invariably met with during my excursions through the island. If some of the "habitans" were lately betrayed into an intemperance of speech and demeanor not altogether justifiable towards Mr. Jeremie and his satellites, let the peculiarly obnoxious position which that gentleman occupied, as Protector General of the slaves, be taken into consideration: let it be remembered how much the intrinsic odium of the office was heightened by Mr. Jeremie's unconciliating and violent deportment,—his arrival in the island, too, being but a few weeks subsequent to the importation of a pamphlet, which evidenced in the most unequivocal manner, his strong prepossessions against the planters. Lastly, let it not be forgotten, that the extent of the indemnity to be received by the planters in exchange for their alienated slaves, was as yet unfixed, while the first menace of equalization of duties, was growling in the distant east. It must be allowed, that the rumour of faction, generated by highly excited feelings, and fostered by a press of unparalleled scurrility, has exercised an inauspicious influence over society, particularly in Port Louis, where the distinction between "Trojan" and "Tyran" is now markedly defined,—and that some of the French creoles, rendering us in some measure responsible for the unpopular acts of our Government, regard us with feelings of alienation, if not hostility. This cloud on the

social horizon, will, I trust, soon dissipate, and that following the amicable example of the union in the father lands, the transplanted rose and lilly, will bloom together in unjealous beauty amongst the spicy-groves of "Cerne." No one who has resided for any length of time in the island, but must have been struck with the attachment, which the French creoles evince towards their native soil, and their uninquisitiveness to transport themselves beyond the blue-watery horizon, that girdles in their beloved island. I one day called on a French lady in Port Louis, who mentioned that she had just received a letter from a creole correspondent then in Paris, who complained bitterly of being "ennuye" "in the largest metropolis of Europe," and said that she was incessantly sighing after her dear "Maurice." What then can be a more convincing proof of the gloomy apprehensions, with which the "habitans" at large look forward to emancipation, than the resolve of many of them to transplant themselves from the soil in which their feelings, habits, and prejudices have so firmly inrooted themselves, and to exchange their tranquil independence, and genial climate, for the cold skies, but effervescing political atmosphere of France. Sincerely should I rejoice if my forebodings were falsified by the result, that the same breath which can say to the slave "be free," could endow him with the qualities requisite for making a right use of freedom, and that the "Mauritius," after the crowning measure of emancipation, should become the happiest of possible colonies. I have written to little purpose, indeed, if the reader should rise from the perusal of this with the impression, that I am an underhand advocate of prescriptive abuses, or would insidi-

ously assume any necessary connexion between the continuance of slavery, and the prosperity of our sugar plantations. The island of "Puerto Rico," a colony of the most notoriously misgoverning kingdom of Europe, poor fallen Spain, affords a splendid illustration of a rich and flourishing tropical settlement, in which by far the larger proportion of the cultivators are free-men. Emancipation unquestionably should have been conferred on all the blacks of the "Mauritius" unexpectedly, but not, I think, until after the lapse of such a sufficient period, as duly improved, would have, in some measure, prepared them for this priceless but hazardous boon. Had a probationary period of twenty or twenty-five years been assigned in lieu of the present limited term of "apprentissage," the incorrigible elders of the present generation would have past away, and the infants of to-day, under a broad but simple system of education, might have attained to years of discretion, a very dissimilar race from their forefathers, and qualified to receive the blessing of which the latter were not found worthy. This system of education should have comprised practical agriculture, reading, writing, and the simpler rules of arithmetic, in addition to which the elements of morality, and the sublime precepts of Christianity, avoiding dubious and thorny doctrines, should have been timely instilled into their minds. To the few, who might be desirous of an ample range through the regions of knowledge, every facility and encouragement should have been afforded. So powerful an incentive as the hope of rewards, should not have been omitted, and premiums should have been awarded to excellence in the various departments of instruction.

A small spot of ground might have been bestowed on each head of a family, which, under pain of disgrace and forfeiture, he should be compelled to cultivate, and the institution of a horticultural society, similar to that of Calcutta, would have excited the industry and emulation of the negroes, and furnished the island with that in which it is at present deficient, a copious and excellent supply of fruits and vegetables. Individual enfranchisement should have been, as heretofore proposed, as the noblest compensation for good conduct and desert on the part of the "apprentis;" but it should, on all occasions, have been reserved as a reward for tried merit, and unequivocal propriety of behaviour, not, as has been too often the case, conferred in partiality, or caprice on the negative idler, or plausible knave. In order to rescue this boon from abuse, and invest it with added importance and lustre, it might have been made resumable in those cases where the recipient, by his after conduct, should evidence that he had not been deserving of the favour.

The unworthy "affranchis" would then revert to his former state of "apprentissage" and thus to his fellow-servants would have been afforded a signal illustration of the value and the sanctity of liberty. An analogous system has been pursued in our Australian colonies, in the institution of the ticket-of-leave. This indulgence is granted to those prisoners, who conduct themselves for a certain period with regularity and propriety, as assigned servants and labourers. If their after conduct as ticket-of-leave-men, gives satisfaction to their masters, after another term of probation, they are recommended to entire enfranchisement; but should their behaviour, on the contrary, manifest that they are unworthy of the indulgence bestowed upon them, they are reduced to the class of assigned convicts. This

system has been attended with signally beneficial results in "New South Wales" and "Van Dieman's Land," which induces me to think that a corresponding procedure in the distribution of enfranchisement to the "apprentis" of the "Mauritius," might have been fraught with similarly favourable consequences. There are some, perhaps, who may be offended at my recommending a trait of the policy instituted for the transported felons of England to the consideration of the legislators for the black population of the "Mauritius." Had they visited, as I have done, both countries, and compared, with unprejudiced eyes, the character of the "noirs" and the convicts, their opinions would, I think, have undergone no slight revulsion, and they might have been induced to doubt if the generality of the "Tasmanian" and "Australian" prisoners (I except, of course, those double-distilled villains, those finished graduates in crime, who are absorbed by the iron gangs, or Port Arthur, and Norfolk Island, the penal settlements within the penal settlements,) were not, on the whole, more orderly and moral than the "apprentis" of the "Isle of France."

Supposing that a plan, similar to my hypothetical one, had been put in practice, and that it had not (which is certainly improbable) been attended with even partial success, it would have been, at least, a matter of consolation for our lawgivers, to reflect that they had adopted measures ostensibly calculated to produce the desired result, and that if as mortals "they could not command success," they had done more—"deserved it."

May 5th.—After a tedious voyage of six weeks from the Sand-heads, and a night of irritating calm off

Round Island, a favourable though light breeze sprang up, and we made all sail for the harbour of Port Louis.

The "Pouce," "Paterboth," "Trois Mammelles," &c., being on this occasion divested of their usual cloudy drapery, we were at leisure to admire the bold and varied contour of the Mauritius mountains as presented to the seaward spectator. The most indiscriminate observer cannot fail to be impressed with the individuality of the *tout ensemble*, though I cannot, Polonius like, detect the most distant resemblance to a Swan-Cerne, the name conferred on it by its Lusitanian discoverers. Had it been called "a camel," or "a weasel," or "a whale," its nomenclature would not have been a whit less appropriate. I am not ashamed to own that my cheek flushed perceptibly, and my pulse heightened its beat, when I was pointed out in succession, while coasting along the "Poudre D'Or" and "Pamplemousse" districts, the "Isle of Amber," "Le cap de Malheur," and "Le baie de Tombeaux," sites immortalized by "Bernardin St. Pierre's" exquisite romance, a fiction which is perused, in childhood, with sensations of intense interest, and in maturer years with a mellowed pleasure.

If our emotions are less vivid in the latter than in the former instance, it is not that our taste has become more chastened and refined, but that on us no more

The freshness of the heart can fall like dew ;"

that the "trail of the serpent" lies over feelings once green and fresh, and pure as lilies of the valley ; and that we cannot, except by a violent effort, abstract ourselves from our wonted hum-drum, selfish, tare-and-tret existence, into that limpid, and uncorrupted

nature, in which "Paul and Virginia" were cradled and educated, and whither, in the guileless innocence of our childish being, we were spontaneously transported. Nothing can exceed in luxuriant beauty, the prospect of this portion of the island, which, undulating with a gentle inclination to the base of the interior mountain ranges, displays the most exquisite variety of tints, in the rich amber of the sugar plantations, the light verdure of the pasture, the dark green of the forest, and reveals, at intervals, smiling villas with their pleasure grounds and factories, the swivel-shaped funnels of which latter, however, do not enhance the charms of the prospect except to the utilitarian. A sea of the most transparent ultra-marine, frets itself against the coral reefs which nearly surround this island of hurricanes, and a pearly line of foam is thus interposed between the sapphire waters and the emerald shore. In about two hours after receiving our pilot on board, we entered the harbour of Port Louis, a basin of tolerably capacious size, with a narrow entrance, commanded by two microscopic forts. It was nearly sunset when I landed with my "compagnons de voyage," and the distractions of finding porters for our baggage and engaging quarters at the "Hotel du Masse," left us little opportunity for surveying the capital of the Isle of France. The number of negroes and the report of whips, approximating in loudness to pistol-shots, as the drivers urge their mule-drawn carts through the streets,—the number of well dressed women of every hue, from the alabaster throat of the pure creole, to the dusk midnight of "the Althiop's ear,"—the copious sprinkling of Chinese, Arabs, Parsees and Malabares, with the indigenous population, the rude and

yet flimsy appearance of the wooden houses in which wooden planks, innocent of paint, lie horizontally one above the other, with their "junta" of nails, "notorious as the sun at noon day," surmounted with shingled roofs, and the "Babel" of tongues, in which the impure island "patois" predominates, strike, distract, and bewilder the stranger. The proprietor of the inn at which we have established ourselves, lays himself out, we understand, to please the English; and, we hear, that this is unequivocally shewn by the presence of a massive beefsteak daily at breakfast as well as dinner, a dish which looks wonderfully out of its element amongst the "bouillons" and "fricassies" with which it is encircled. Our fare this evening was tolerably good, the wine indifferent. Our chambers we find close and confined after the spacious dormitories of the Chowringhee palaces.

May 6th.—This morning, in company with —, I explored Port Louis. The wooded Pouce forms a fine back-ground to the town of Port Louis; but the hilly shoulders it projects seaward, exclude the greater portion of the city from all breezes but from the north, which here is the warm quarter, and this is the cause of the inordinate heat of Port Louis, the reverberation of a tropical sun, being unmitigated by cooling winds. The very sea-breeze here is said to be relaxing, and wafts neither health nor freshness. On the hill to the right of Port Louis, as one stands with one's face to the harbour, a citadel is creeting. It will have an imposing effect when finished, but the expense of the undertaking will, I understand, be very considerable, and its necessity has yet to be demonstrated. The

private dwellings; as well as the shops, are principally constructed of wood. In the principal streets, however, there are not a few brick houses and some handsome stone domiciles: the latter are either shops or warehouses. The inferiority of the private dwellings is in no way redeemed by the character of the public structures. The custom-house, the first edifice which meets the eye on landing, is in no way distinguished from an ordinary store. The government-house, which next obtrudes itself to sight, is mean and insignificant-looking to a degree. The upper apartments open on a heavy wooden balcony, and the shape of the edifice, a quadrangle curtailed of one side, is at happy variance with every notion of utility or beauty. The Protestant church, formerly a powder-magazine, if shorn in its transformation of its appropriate and massive strength, preserves its original heaviness and nakedness of decoration. The Roman Catholic chapel is in better taste, simple, spacious, and consistent. The theatre, such as one would look for in an English country town. The barracks, solid, roomy and commodious. The streets intersect each other at right angles, and the town is traversed by two or three rivulets, which a hurricane or unusual fall of rain, swells into considerable torrents. These are spanned by plain wooden bridges.

Water, that most inestimable of blessings in a hot climate, is here found in abundance, and of the purest quality. The shops seem well supplied, but the prices of most articles are exorbitant, and the tailor's or linen draper's apprentice, when he hands cassimeres or silk handkerchiefs for your inspection, demeans

himself as if he were granting you a reluctant favour. It would seem that the distinctions of social grades are merged in the prescription of colour, and that, in proportion as the pure whites of this island are scrupulous in defining the nice varieties of Asiatic and African tints, they are remiss in preserving the broad limits of rank maintained in the monarchies and republics of Europe. Is this the result of the Revolution and the absurd doctrine of "Egalite," or is it the consequence of the pride of colour? Perhaps in proportion as the inhabitants of this island are punctiliously austere to all who have the slightest tint of Asiatic and African blood, they are remissly indulgent to those who move in an inferior grade and admit their claims to equality.

May 7th.—Called this morning on Mr. —, to whom I had brought a letter of introduction from Calcutta, and by whom I was cordially received. The interiors of the Port Louis houses, I may here remark, in no way harmonize with their unpromising external aspect. There is no lack of elegance and good keeping in the furniture, which is set off by the tasteful French papers which cover the walls and the polished, fine-veined planks which compose the floor of the apartments.

Dined this evening at the ordinary "Hotel de Masse." Met there two island proprietors, brothers, and by birth Germans. They arrived here penniless adventurers, some years ago, and by industry and prudence laid the basis of a large fortune. Their sugar plantations in the "Rempart" district brought them last year sixteen thousand pounds net profits. So turns Fortune's wheel! After dinner we adjourned to the theatre. Had it been built in the latitude of "Archangel,"

the exclusion of fresh air could not have been more satisfactorily effected. To an Indian accustomed to live in natural or artificial currents of air, I need not suggest how calculated the state of the atmosphere was to detract from the pleasure of the performance. In other respects the accommodation is indifferent, the "loges" are small, and the benches so narrow that it requires some dexterity to preserve one's equipoise for any length of time. I witnessed the representation of three "vaudevilles," but owing to my distance from the stage, and the rapid enunciation of the interlocutors, I left the theatre, as imperfectly informed of the several plots as the calculating boy, who, in the hurricane of Othello's jealous madness, could imperturbably count in succession each word of each burning sentence, and render at the conclusion of the piece a faithful estimate of the sum total. A kindred spirit had he with the geographer, who traced the voyages of Æneas on the map, with his "Mazo" before him; but, as during the period embraced by the fourth book, the hero was a "detenue" at Carthage, and as during that comprized in the sixth, he was wandering over the chartless "Styx" and the trackless "Tartarus," he prudently omitted the moonlight tenderness of the former and the meridian splendour of the latter.

May 9th.—This morning consulted Dr. Stewart. He recommends the "Plaines de Wilhems" as the most salubrious district in the island. Port Louis is evidently the hottest and least healthy quarter; yet fevers and acute diseases are of rare occurrence, and the creoles, who are devotedly attached to their dear "Maurice," consider the climate as faultless and even peerless. Their generally temperate mode of living must contribute as much as the climate to the good health they enjoy. This evening, after an early dinner,

I strolled to the suburbs of Port Louis, and saw the Mohurrun celebrated with greater "eclat" than I had ever witnessed in India. I was astonished at the immense crowd, which poured out to view the celebration of this Mahomedan festival, and still more so at the large proportion of the better classes mingled with the mulatto and negro population. The spiritual pride of the Mahomedan devotees was, I doubt not, a little gratified by the "empressement" evinced by the French ladies, while the sacred turrets were performing their evolutions. An open grassy expanse of land, dividing Port Louis from the mountainous shoulder to the east, was the site chosen for the "fête," and the night was characterized by that mingled brilliancy and softness which is unknown, save in tropical regions. On the whole the picturesque, though barbaric pomp of the procession, as viewed in the flickering glare of torchlight, the variety of colour and costume amongst the assembled spectators, the numerous groupes of handsome and well-dressed women, some walking, others standing, others sitting on the natural seats of basalt strewed at the foot of the hill, the distant harbour, the nearer town, the overhanging mountain touched by the silver moonlight, the tender azure of the sky, the soft balmy atmosphere, formed a combination indescribably novel, various, fascinating and alike congenial to the "Allegro" and "Penseroso" moods of the imaginative observer.

May 12th.—Climbed this morning the citadel hill, from whence I had a good bird's-eye view of the town, harbour, and the "Pamplemousse" district. In the evening went to the theatre and witnessed the

representation of "Guillaume Tell," and "the Actrice en voyage." The former is a favorite opera with the French, and the singing was far above respectable. The orchestra is also very creditable. A Madame "Hortense," enacted the principal "role" in the latter piece with much spirit.

May 14th.—Essayed a pretty and secluded beach about a mile and half from Port Louis, in the hope of enjoying a bathe, but my expectations were destined to be like

"The snow-flake on the river,
A moment white, then gone for ever."

I arrived on shore with arms and feet so lacerated by the insidious coral twigs and branches, that I was obliged to give up all thoughts of sea-bathing at Port Louis. If one leaves the shelter of the coral reefs, there are ravenous sharks on the look-out for freshly aliment, so that the unguarded swimmer may illustrate that trite line in "the wisdom of nations:"

"Incidit in Scyllam, qui vult vitare Charybdim."

Went in the afternoon and visited the Catholic burying ground. The casarina, the cypress, and varieties of the *plum* family are interspersed amongst the tombs. At the head of the graves are generally inserted crosses to which are suspended garlands, or rosettes of white ribbon; vases filled with just-gathered flowers, and well-weeded beds of balsams, pinks, geraniums, myrtles, and roses, in the vicinity of other tombs, were pleasing illustrations of surviving affection. I observed none of the rankness and squalid neglect, so general in the cemeteries of India, nor was I revolted as in the burying-grounds of Calcutta, by the sight of a score of ready-dug graves provided for a night of supererogatory mortality and, "pour encourager les autres,"

the peach-faced writers and cadets just arrived from England. On the contrary, the salubrity of the island was attested by the advanced inscriptions on the tombs recording the age at which many of the tenants had been consigned to this city of the dead. While strolling through the cemetery, I accidentally was present at the burial of a young infant. The mother, and the sole mourner, a mulatress, stood by the new-dug grave, into which four negroes had lowered the coffin of her child, and were refilling it with the loosened mould. I was affected at once by the absence of a religious ritual (the Roman Catholic service for the dead being altogether performed in the church, and not, as with us, reserving the latter, and exquisitely impressive portion for the closing scene, where dust is committed to dust, ashes to ashes,) and by the contrast, which the intense, absorbing sorrow of the bereaved mother presented to the mechanical indifference of the negro grave-diggers.

After the latter had departed, the mourner remained for some minutes, apparently stupified with woe, then with a convulsive start and shudder, she hung a wreath of white roses on the wooden cross, which had been planted at the head of the grave, and departed with slow and tottering steps, like "Rachael, mourning for her child, and would not be comforted, because he was not."

May 17th.—Went this evening to a small party at the house of Monsieur ———. The daughters, which is an unusual occurrence in an island, where now at least the "Anglo mania" is not prevalent, speak English with fluency and correctness. After tea, music, quadrilles, and waltzes occupied the evening, and I could not disguise from myself the ease, animation,

and "abandon" to the enjoyment of the moment, that are so rarely visible in the elaborate and crowded English assembly. I do not deny that the English are, at times, accessible to ebullitions of gaiety and high spirits, but these are reliefs and contrasts to their ordinary calm, and melancholy mood. Like the warm springs of Iceland, they sometimes astonish strangers by a "jet" of hilarity, and as subside to their former subterranean level; whereas the gaiety of the French is constant, ceaseless, unexhaustible, as the bubbling current from a living spring. How many of our well-born Englishmen preserve in the haunts of elegant dissipation the gait and the air congenial to the house of mourning; while the abrupt and forced gaiety of others terminates like the resolve of "Acres" to stand his adversary's fire, their artificial merriment, like his transient prowess, "oozing out at their fingers' ends."

May 19th.—Spent the day with Mr. Ainslie, of Pamplemousse. After breakfast visited the botanical gardens. Though manifestly neglected, the beauty and diversity of the trees, native as well as exotic, as also of the shrubs and parasitical plants, amply repay the visitor. These gardens are intersected by numerous unbrageous walks furnished at intervals with commodious seats, which render them a favourite holiday resort. I much regretted the absence of a savant to point out to me the various arborescent productions. Here I saw, for the first time, a specimen of the "travellers tree," from whose stalk, after incision, a pure, refreshing fluid exudes. I also made a pilgrimage to the "soi-disant" tombs of "Paul and Virginia." They are situated in the gardens of a Captain Heyliger, distant about a quarter of a mile from Pamplemousse church, and are altogether very tasteless

impositions. Yet "the magic of a name" attracts many visitors to these fictitious monuments, and numerous English autographs, evidence the national predilection for *indorsing* distinguished relics.

May 20th.—This morning in company with Mr. — and Mr. — ascended the "Pouce." We found the journey more tedious and fatiguing than we had anticipated, the path being steep, strewed with rough, jagged stones, and, towards the summit, slippery from the copious night dews. From a natural terrace on the interior side of the mountain, and about five hundred feet from its peak, we enjoyed a superb view of the "Mocha," "Flac," "Plaines de Wilhems," and "St. Pierre" districts, with the "Corps de Garde," "Les trois Mammelles," and other mountain groups. Unfortunately, before we could attain the summit of the mountain, a drizzling rain came on, accompanied with a high gusty wind, which completely enveloped us in clouds, and deprived us of the magnificent prospect we had promised ourselves of the entire island and the surrounding expanse of blue ocean. The elevation of the Pouce above the sea level, is about 2,500 feet. The copse in which we breakfasted, when resting from the fatigues of our ascent, was profusely sprinkled with gigantic ferns, orchuses and wild raspberries—the latter in size and colour resembling those of England, but devoid of the refreshing acid flavour, which distinguishes this fruit in the temperate zone. Went to the theatre in the evening, saw "La Jeune de Miel" and "L'Hospitaliere." Find that I can follow the actors in their several parts with fewer checks than formerly.

May 23d.—Drove this morning with Mr. — to the Plaines de Wilhems, looked at and engaged a tolerable country house, at 25 piastres a month, attached to which is a garden, tank, and extensive shrubberies.

Breakfasted with Mr. — and Mrs. — at “Beatt Segour.” The situation is charming; the grounds, owing to the circumstance of the son-in-law of the proprietor being an Englishman, have been laid out in the British mode. Before the house there is a well-clipped lawn interspersed with shrubs, flower-beds, and one or two sheets of water, whence the view roams unimpeded over a noble expanse of plain, mountain, and forest. I may here observe, that the French taste in gardening and ornamental shrubbery is tame and artificial to a degree; it is precisely such as Charles the Second imported into England with the “coiffeurs” and ruffles of the court of “Le Grand Monarque;” rectangular walks, bordered with liliputian canals, which irrigate docked hedges, and generally before the principal entrance of the house, a scanty, four sided clearance, in the centre of which a sun-dial girt with “roses edouardes,” marks the lapse of the hours. The labours of one woodman “between morn and dewy eve” would open a dozen superb vistas of brown forest, golden cane, grey cliff and blue sea; but no, the “habitans” preserve with a bigotted reverence the integrity of their unbrageous mango and citron avenues, and will not curtail of a bough the dragon-wood, and guava thickets which block the pure breezes from their dwellings, or fell one almond tree, which showers its husks into their verandas. That exquisite stanza of Beattie’s,

“ Oh how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which nature to her votary yields?”

*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*	*

“ Oh how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven?”
would seem downright rank raving to a Frenchman, so totally incapable is he of comprehending, far less

of feeling, the beauties of "nature's naked loveliness." That a Parisian should erect the artificial scenery of the theatre into a standard, by which to arbitrate on the fancy-free charms of a natural landscape, and complain that the mountain cataract, in its uncurbed majesty and terror, was repulsive and unnatural, because it was not regulated by the laws, which directed the gushings of the suburban "jet d'eau," would be neither incongruous or unnatural; but that those born and educated amidst scenes of grandeur and softness, should remain unaffected by their sweet contagious influence, and gaze "with cold, unloving eyes" on prospects, which would have extorted "bravuras" of admiration from the fastidious blaze, apathetic "pocourante" of "Candide," is as strange and inexplicable, as it is true; yet hardly inexplicable, if we make due allowance for the power exerted by conventional rules, and prescriptive prejudices, in repressing the suggestions of nature, and the ties of local associations.—Went this evening to the theatre; the pieces were "Les chansons de Beranger" and a vaudeville, in which the ridicule hinges on English sentimentality. The heroine of the latter piece is an English lady, dressed, of course, in a riding habit and beaver hat, (the French seem to be of opinion that our fair countrywomen pass the greater part of their lives in the saddle,) who babbles plaintively anent green fields, and purling streams, and "the sweet south, stealing over a bank of violets," and is ready to die away into the arms of every masculine stranger she encounters on her travels, whether he be a baronet, a linen-draper, or an ostler. The acting was, on the whole, good.

May 25th.—Purchased a Java poney this morning. Poneys are generally recommended as preferable to horses for the steep and stony island roads. The Cape supplies the “Mauritius” with horses, of which the majority have evidently done good service in their native country, more, at least, than they are likely to accomplish during their insular existence. The climate is decidedly unfavourable to horses. Hundreds are annually swept off by the farcy, and two out of three are on an average unavailable at the same time. The mules and asses employed in the plantations are of a finer order, and, from their hardier constitution, are but slightly affected by the climate. They are imported from the Cape, “La Belle France,” and Buenos Ayres.

May 26th.—Called this morning on Monsieur — . He is a scientific man and has but lately returned from Bourbon, through which island he has been making a tour, during the course of which he has visited the “Salaze” mountains, and the mineral baths lately discovered there. To judge from the accounts given of these mineral waters in the “Bourbon” and “Mauritius” gazettes, and the wonderful cures they have effected, they should contain a “panacea” for all diseases, aches, and pains that “flesh is heir to.” Monsieur — has written a short account of his excursion, which he has promised to send for my perusal.—Walked this evening to the “Champs de Mars.” It is a small plain extending from the outskirts of Port Louis to the foot of the “Pouce,” and is applied to the various purposes of a race-course, parade, cricket-ground, and “prado.” Of old it was the favourite evening resort of the French “haut monde,” but is now little frequented, except by children and

their attendants. On band-evenings, a small circle of carriages and buggies give an animation to the scene, but with a few exceptions their inmates are English. As the play-ground of the European children the "Champs de Mars" possessed most interest for me, and here they may be seen in the evening, walking, running and rolling on the grass, and that without peril from snake or noxious reptile of any kind, of all which, this island is as blissfully ignorant, as

"The first flower of the earth, first gem of the sea."

To a stranger from India, where the gap between five and fifteen is almost as perfect as if the "fee-faw-fum" days of the ogres were reacted in that sultry land, it is a cheering sight to view boys and girls of all ages, "disporting on the green," though the generality, it must be confessed, have a delicate exotic appearance, which their parents would doubtless gladly barter for the rude native robustness of those in

"The inviolate island of the sage and free."

May 27th.—Dined this evening with ——. Our conversation was confined to insular topics. This gentleman arrived in the island soon after the conquest, and has resided here ever since. The various political changes that have occurred during this period, are stored in his memory, and he is well acquainted with the personal history of the principal French families. He spoke with warmth of the kindness and cordiality that once existed between the French and English, and the social gaiety and blandness that fascinated and detained the traveller, who ultimately tore himself from this enchanting island with a reluctance commensurate to that of "Rinaldo" when

leaving the fabled bower of "Armida." He dwelt with regret on the discussions at present too apparent between "Trojan and Tyrian," the intemperance and "acharnement" of the "Jeremie" and "D'Epinay" factions, and, lastly, the licentiousness of the Port Louis press. Though blame in his idea seemed to attach to both parties, far the larger portion rested at the door of the "Slave Protector General," whose strong prejudices, warm temper, and martial-severity, were ill calculated to allay, or conciliate the excited, and, in their own opinion, ill-treated planters. For myself, though conscious of no bias to either party, I think, that ignorant as they then were of the indemnification to be granted in lieu of their alienated slave-stock, with the menace of equalization suspended over their heads, and exasperated by the uncompromising and arbitrary proceedings of Mr. Jeremie, who had imprisoned some of the most respectable of their body, the subsequent behaviour of the planters should not be too severely scrutinized. They must have been more or less than men, had they, on that occasion, preserved a faultless, peaceful equanimity of conduct, and not been tempted to transgress the pale of politeness and the barriers of the law. It is true that by Mr. Jeremie's departure "the head and front of the offending" has been removed, but the germs of schism and party rancour have been too widely diffused to allow one to indulge the expectation that all traces of the past tumult will be speedily obliterated,—not assuredly as long as the press is prostituted to party purposes, and continental politics, and subjects of general interest are altogether postponed to the petty interests, and rancorous politics of this little island. The courtesy that softens, the candour that elevates,

the sense of shame that in the absence of purer motives, moderates the feud of the European gazettes, are unrecognized by the editors of the "Mauritius" journals. The cleverest of these papers is conducted, or at least prompted by Monsieur D'Epinay, an acute and dexterous lawyer, who from his pre-eminence with his party, has obtained the "soubriquet" of King Adrian, and who is celebrated for giving the most "recherchés soirées" in the island. As for the slaves, they seem anything but satisfied with the new order of things. The name of "apprentis" even is distasteful to some of them. One carpenter, a skilful "ouvrier," complained to Mr. — of the slur that was thrown upon his mechanical reputation by being obliged to enter the ranks of the "apprentis." A more solid cause of dissatisfaction is supplied to them in the severity of the penalties to which they are sentenced by the "Judge Special," if convicted, penalties to which the chastisements inflicted by their masters were mere "bagatelles," and added to this there is their rooted dislike to innovation.

" Which makes them rather bear those ills they have,
Than fly to others that they know not of."

Well fed, well clothed, tended and medicined when sick, with a surplus, moreover, for the conveniences and luxuries of civilization, their state is preferable, how far preferable, physically, at least, to that of our labourers and operatives. If charity should begin at home, surely the hamlets of the country and the city's squalid alleys, present ample scope for the labours of a *Harmony*, full of philanthropists, ere they embark on a north-west passage, or charter a vessel with speculative sympathies for "Ternate and Tidore." Were poetical justice done to some of our

soi-distant philanthropists, could they murmur at the sentence, which would transfer them to the limbo described by our immortal poet, to be whirled about in a ceaseless vortex with

“Eremites and friars,

White, black, and grey, with all their trumpery?”

or to the more indulgent decree, which would enrol them in the philosophical society of Sagado, where, with the sage, whose notable invention first ploughed the acorn-sowed field with a battalia of boars, sows, and their farrows of nine, and the rival academic who devote himself to the more exquisite labour of extracting sun-beams from cucumbers, they may arrive for medals and fellowships.

May 28th.—Read to-day M——’s “Esquisse de Bourbon,” which discovers him a man of active, inquiring, cultivated mind. While tracing the alternations of strata, and the gradations of vegetation on the lofty Bourbon mountains, he has not been inattentive to the grand and glorious scenery in those seldom-visited regions. I give the following extract from his journal, on the subject of the “Salazô” Spa:—“Ces deux Messieurs etaient venus demandu eux laux un meilleur etat de “santé” sur la foi d’autres buveurs, qui les avaient devancés; car elles commencent a faire du bruit pour les cures qu’elles ont operés; et le Gouvernement ayant jugé convenable d’y envoyer une commission, a decide sur son rapport qu’un etablissement y serait organisé, pour y soumettre au traitement thermale nombre de valetudinaires, que lui envoie sans cesse la colonie de Madagascar, des Ureterites, des Urothrites, des hepatites, et surtout des splenites et Egastrites chroniques. Un livre, qui fut la mesure preferée, donne pour resultat dans l’analyse.

SUBSTANCES LIBRES.

	£	Gn.
Acide carbonique.....	1 250	= 1* 250

SUBSTANCES FIXES.

Carbonate de soude	0 500	} = 1 350
———— de magnesia....	0 430	
———— de chaux	0 180	
———— de fer.....	0 20	
Hydrodorate de soude.....	0 7	
Sulphate de soude.....	0 30	
Silice	0 160	
P.....	0 23	

Elle est incolore, inodore, et d'une saveur acidule; elle agit sensiblement la teinture de tournesol; si elle est agitée, elle laisse dégager le gaz acide carbonique. Elle a quelques propriétés alcalines, et elle dépose une matière blanchâtre contenant de la Silice et des carbonate de fer-chaux, et magnesia. La source, enseveli sous un atterrissement peu étendu s'écoule dans le courant, et sur la rive droite, à des distances diverses, par plusieurs branches, qu'il seroit facile de réunir en une seule conduite, qui donnerait ces eaux plus chaudes et plus pures, car dans l'état présent des infiltrations visibles y mêlent les eaux de torrent. La principale branche marquant 32 cent. une autre 28 centigrade, et une troisième, 21 cent la température atmosphérique était 14 cent. le matin, 16 cent. en midi, celle de la rivière 15½ cent. Des vapeurs qui ne vont pas jusqu'à condenser s'échappent le matin par petites bouffées, de l'angle inférieur du bassin de la principale branche. Ainsi que de nombreuses bulles de gaz acide carbonique; qui abandonnent non seulement au fond de ce bassin, mais

au loin sur les rochers un depot considerable de substances qu'il tenait en dissolution.

Ce produit, qui est floconneux, a demi precipité au fond du bassin, ou il reste mouvant, facile a s'agiter, et a troubler la transparence de l'eau, quand on y touche et de couleur isabelle ; il fait effervescence avec les acides et se compose en presque totalité de silice, et de tres petite proportion de carbonates de chaux et de magnesia ; les sels qu'il forme conservent la teinte orangée du depot, conformement aux lois Generales de la crystalization. Ils sont amorphes, ou en cristaux, suivant que le depot a ete lent ou accéléré. La temperature commence de la Commune de Salaze, flotte durant l'annee entre 10 et 30 cent et l'extraordinaire fécondité du sol en choux, fleurs, pommes de terres, navets, chaux, asperges, artichaux, et toute espece quelconque de legumes d'une grosseur, qualité, quantité qui passe la vraisemblance, les tiges de cresson y atteignent six pieds de haut, et trois pouces de circonférence. Les cafés, la vigne, les cereales, y prosperent tous les fruits promettent d'y reussir, et l'avenir en espere des ressources des tous genres."

May 27th.—Migrated to my new house in the "Plaine de Wilhems." It is about six miles from Port Louis, and its altitude about 900 feet above the sea level, There is a freshness and buoyancy in the atmosphere here, which is denied to the Muscadins of the capital, and the thermometer at one P. M. stands seven degrees lower than it did yesterday at Masse's Hotel at the same hour. The garden and pleasure grounds evince, even in their present neglect, the taste of some former proprietor, and a flourishing oak, which

projects its boughs over the house-roof, attests the mildness of the climate.

May 28th.—This morning strolled through my extensive but forlorn demesne, was enchanted with the beauty of the scenery in the neighbourhood. A five minutes' walk from my chateau through an avenue of wild citrons, and a narrow fringe of plantation, conducted me to the loveliest prospect it has been my lot to gaze on, since many years ago I made one of a delightful party to the lakes of "Kilanny."

Never "while memory holds her seat," shall be effaced from my imagination the impression of deep, vivid, overwhelming transport, which I received when swept through a narrow channel, that sinuated round a precipitous ledge of rock: the vision of the upper lake, "like one entire and perfect chrysolite," broke upon my sight. Poetry may lavish with a Cleopatra, prodigality, "her thoughts that breathe, and words that burn," and painting may exhaust her lines of beauty, and her Venetian hues, but both will fail to convey adequate and perfect ideas of the contrasting yet harmonizing traits that characterize this peerless mountain-lake; those purple mountains in their majestic nakedness; the cry of the eagle, and the lair of the tempest; those smiling green savannas revealed at the base of the abrupt and lofty hills, clothed with primeval forest, where the oak, the fir, the mountain ash, the holly, the beech, the elm, mingle their varied conformations, and many-tinted foliage; the turbulent beauty of that headlong, foaming cataract, drowning in its harsh thunder the overtures of the woodland songsters; the clear, ever-shaded rill, in whose mirror at evening, the unbrageous antlers of the red deer may

be seen reflected; the "spots of greenery" which stud the dark bosom of the lake, each crowned with its tiara of Arbutus, from whose green foliage the snowy flower, and the crimson, strawberry-like fruit, peer in amicable rivalry; the romantic island, where the mouldering cottage of the Hermit Ronayne "imparts a human interest to the otherwise savage-scene; the flowers, elsewhere the pride of gardens, and conservatories with which benignant nature has decked the grey rock and verdant turf in this fortunate region; and lastly the flute, and hughle notes, reverberated and repeated by ten-voiced echo, the first, loud and sharp, the next lower and softer, till in the last sweet faint dying tones, one can scarcely resist the impression that some listening fairy orchestra, are prolonging the strains of the mortal musicians. Shall I omit the living companions, and associates in the scene; some endeared by the nearest ties of relationship, others, familiarized by former intimacy, and all, of congenial and cultivated minds, and exquisitely susceptible of the beauties of nature; Erin's sons, frank, affectionate, intelligent, and polished; Erin's daughters in their innate purity, deep-seated tenderness, native grace, fearless gaiety, and freedom from the slightest taint of prudery and affectation. Shall I pass over, those evening collations at picturesque "Dinas" or classic "Mucrus," where exercise and the pure, elastic air lent a zest to the roasted salmon, which three hours before was slumbering in the cool depths of Glens Bay, the Kerry mutton, and the Kerry grouse, nor where, amongst foreign vintages was forgotten the amber-coloured "Poiteen," the smoke of whose illicit, parent distillery was even then curling up the side of one of those distant "Magillicuddy rocks?" Shall I

ungratefully forget those fine, muscular, lake boatmen, one of whom might have sat in a Florentine "studio" the model for a Hercules.

"While yet Canova could create below"

the wild, imaginative, traditions, which, in the sincerity of faith, they imparted to us, of "O'Donaghue" and the chieftains of other days, who have found "a local habitation" in some cascade, or islet of the lakes, and the shrewdness, "naive humour, and sprightly wit, which characterized their remarks upon this every-day working world." To those scenes and to that era, I would be almost tempted to apply the forcible language of the "Giaour," adverting to his perished "Leila:"

"I die, but first I have possest;
And, come what may, I have been blest."

But to return from my Killarney digression, which will excuse me in my own eyes, and, I trust, in those of my readers' also (if I am ever destined to have any,) from the labour of another description. I must in candour allow, that if I was not charmed, nature at least was not to blame, and that I saw assembled at one "coup d'œil" the choicest combinations and contrasts of mountain, glen, plain, precipice, sombre forest and smiling cane-fields, stream, cataract and sea, not to omit pretty "chateaux" peeping from their embowering shades. I will also confess, that when satiated with the beauties of the scene, I lay down on the green matted sward, and looked first to the distant deep, on whose glassy surface two white sails lay motionless, like "painted ships upon a painted ocean," and then turned to the blue sky over head, in which a hundred yards above me two of the snowy, rudder-

tailed tropic birds were poisoning themselves, while a light zephyr fanned my brow, and the monotonous harmony of a distant cascade soothed my ear. I felt, for a moment, at least, as if existence and enjoyment had been incorporated !

♦ May 30.—Went to-day on a visit to “ Bassin ” the property of Mr. — , one of the most extensive sugar manufactories in the island. The season will not set in for another month, so there was little to arrest my attention in the dormant steam engines, and untenanted factory. Mr. — has invited me to visit him in July or August, when the sugar-works, “ apprentices,” mules, and machinery will be in full activity. Accompanied the proprietor and another visiter after breakfast, through the sugar plantations.

We skirted one fine unbroken expanse of cane of about 300 acres, and it needed not the prejudiced eyes of the planter, to admire the luxuriant vigour of the crop. The canes being now in arrow, as it is called in the West Indies, the sturdy obesity of the stalks was relieved by the light grace of their flexile, feathery heads. Bordering the canes was a narrow strip of arrow-root, and in an adjoining field, the manioc, or cassava, here known under the general term of provision. The poisonous juice being expressed, a wholesome and farinaceous aliment is derived from the roots of the plant. Roasted in thin cakes the manioc, is a standard accompaniment to the breakfasts of the “ habitants.” The quantum of provision supplied by one acre of cassava, disdains comparison with the proportion of nutriment furnished from the same area of potatoes; and, according to the statements of the

Mauritius planters, must even exceed that supplied by the plantain, (in Baron Humbolt's opinion, the most prolific of vegetable productions). The manioc, however, forms only a portion of the negroes rations, rice imported from Bengal, constituting their principal sustenance. From the cane-fields, we diverged to a small coffee plantation. The bushes are set in rows under the shade of mango, or other forest trees, to screen them from the fury of the hurricanes, to whose ravages the spice trees formerly cultivated in this island, were equally obnoxious. The vast profits derived from cane of late years, have caused the cultivation of both coffee and spices to be almost entirely abandoned, in spite of an eminently congenial soil and climate; and could the present price of sugar be guaranteed from falling another ten or fifteen years, Aladdin's magic lamp would be a supererogatory wish for the proprietor of a large, unmortgaged Mauritius property. As it is, he regards with the most acute apprehensions, the impending measures of equalization of duties, and unreserved emancipation of the "noirs," and during the height of the panic a twelve month since, a cautious capitalist might have purchased some of the finest properties in the island, at half their intrinsic value. I was much struck with the sleek, healthy, comfortable, appearance of the "noirs" on Mr. —'s estate. On looking over a list of the male and female "apprentis," I was not a little amused by their "recherches" nomenclature, "Achille," "Anacharsis," Antoninus Pius, "Gustavus Adolphus," "Semiramis," "Psyche," "Othafic," "Isidore," &c. &c. As the citizens of Utopia evinced their contempt of the previous metals by employing

them only in the most vulgar household utensils, so the creoles of the Mauritius and West Indies have, with emulating constancy, illustrated their depreciation of time-honoured names and classic associations by linking them with this unfortunate and abject race, the "servants of servants," in the emphatical language of Scripture. In this, as in all similar perversions, there is something repugnant to the judgement, and the taste, and its tendency, like that of parodies and travesties, is to degrade the dignified and disfigure the lovely.

May 31st.—Left Bassin in the afternoon for my place in the "Plaine de Wilhems." Ran through "Les derniers jours d'un condamné," by Victor Hugo. It is an intensely powerful, but painful analysis of humanity in the most interesting situation in which it can be placed. We see a man, whose hours are numbered, who is doomed to expiate his crimes by an ignominious death, who in the silence and loneliness of his cell, sees in his mental vision the same dreary and perpetual vista closed by a greedy gibbets and a cold, cruel expectant crowd.

Apprehension, anguish, and remorse, lend their mingled gloom to the "briga contrada" of his brief future, save when flashes of deceitful hope momentarily checquer the lightless landscape with their transient brilliancy, to make his "darkness visible" and sink him into a lower deep of despair. His naked human heart is bared before us, to the pulsation of its minutest fibres, and like the curious novice, who has been lately introduced into the dissecting-room, and in spite of blanching cheek, relaxing sinews, and

rebellious nerves, contemplates with a strange interest the operations of the surgical veteran; so do we involuntarily and thrillingly watch the progress of this intellectual anatomist. None, but the prejudiced can deny the genius, and the versatile powers of this writer. Now we have a cathedral described with the accurate knowledge, and elaborate curiousness of the antiquary; then a dialogue with the ease, animation and fidelity of Scott; here scenes in their unchastised luxuriousness recalling the author of the "Monk;" there touches of pathos, and passion, not unworthy of "Burns;" or "Byron." As a specimen of the unmixed horrible, I know no passage—not even the robbers' hut scene in "Count Fathom," to surpass the fearful catastrophe of the priest of "Notre Dame." "Victor Hugo's" faults are quite as pronounced as his beauties. He has taken liberties with his native idiom, which in the eyes of purists, would ever exclude him from a confraternity with "Voltaire" and "Montesquieu," and "Buffon and Rousseau;" his humour is sometimes "ricanant." (I remember no sneering "bon mots" in the "naive," delightful tales of "La Fontaine,") in some of his high-wrought scenes, the preparatory foaming and lashing himself into excitement is too undisguised. We see not rarely the contortions of the sybil without her inspiration, and he will vainly seek to screen himself from the "Caproean" puriencies of some of his descriptions, and the wanton, unmasked impieties, which are scattered with no sparing hand through his pages.

June 4th.—Rode into Port Louis and established myself at "Masse's Hotel" for two or three days,

dined with Mr. —, formerly an indigo planter of Bengal, and now settled in Port Louis, the climate of which place he finds more congenial to his constitution, after a residence of many years in the east, than England, with its dreary November fogs, and high March winds. Went to the theatre in the evening. Saw "L'Espion Russe." Few English as usual, but a throng of French with whom the theatre seems a positive "pessé."

June 6th.—Met breakfasting at Masse's a Mr. —, a Bombay civilian, *en route* to the Cape. He had been living for nearly a year and a half in Asiatic Russia. It may be an interesting point for those who purpose making the overland journey, by that less hackneyed route, to know that, if one travels as a gentleman, one must assume, if one has it not, some military rank. Mr. — adopted the military grade corresponding to his standing as a civilian, wore a blue surtout and sash, with the appendages of sword and pistols, and had the satisfaction of seeing the guard turn out, at every town he arrived at, to do him the honours of a field officer. He, of course, took the precaution of expressing himself on the art of tactics with the most diplomatic reserve.

Went in the evening to the theatre; the pieces were *La Maison de Coterie*, and the opera of *Zampa*. I was much pleased with the latter performance: the situations are striking, the music grand, and the scenery attractive. There are some traits of analogy between the plot of *Zampa* and that of Moliere's *Don Juan*. Madame Maire, the heroine, sang with great taste and feeling. This and the *Fra Diavolo* are favourite operas with the French, and it is not uncommon to hear the

negro lads in the streets, humming and whistling passages from these admired performances. A taste for music, and a violent penchant for dancing, pervade all classes in the Mauritius, from the fair creole, the syren of the city Soirée, to the African in the camp playing on the rude instruments of his country, and joining with his comrades in their wild, uncouth national dance. The creole negroes, who are infinitely superior in intelligence, address, and aptitude for the luxuries and tastes of civilization, to the other branches of the sable family, regard the unsophisticated amusements of the continent born noirs with the most supercilious contempt. Nothing but quadrilles and waltzes harmonize with their *haut monde* notions, to which flutes and violins are, of course, indispensable accompaniments. The negresses dress most disproportionately to their means and rank in life: muslin gowns, gauze handkerchiefs, tortoise-shell combs, gold ear-rings, coral negligees, enter into the list of absolute necessities with the ladies of this class; at least, all those who take a lead in the gay world.

On the principle of extremes meeting, the relaxed morality of courts is more than rivalled by the unrestrained licentiousness of this class.

The more expensive articles of apparel and the bijouterie, without exception, are the presents of the cavaliere servente of the month or the day, for mobility is a conspicuous feature in their attachments.

The passion of jealousy, so strongly developed in the moral organization of the Hindoo, and to which five out of ten of the murders perpetrated in the Dooab and Rohilcund may be traced, would be regarded in the Mauritius noir as a "*lusus naturæ*."

"I think the sun, when they were born,
Drew all such humours from them."

If Titus is the favoured gallant of Berenice, Adrian the husband of Berenice, is the *cher ami* of Diana, the spouse of Titus; so, to make use of a favourite expression which they apply to a diversity of situations, they are all quits. As the most shameless profligacy on the part of the negress, detracts in no degree from her consideration with her female acquaintances, so the most notorious dishonesty on the part of the negro does not lower him a whit in the estimation of his comrades.

In spite of the utmost vigilance of the police, receiving houses are numerous at Port Louis and Mahébourg, and there are few householders who have not to rue the dishonesty of their trusted domestics.

Casually, indeed, they evince a premeditation, sagacity, and adroitness in their Cacus exploits, that would not discredit the finished shop-lifters and burglars of London and Paris, and might win respect from Vidocq that Napoleon of thief-takers. But I will pursue so repulsive a picture no farther. To ascend to a higher grade, those who are known under the generic term of mulattos; physically speaking, more particularly the women, they possess a decided superiority over the half-castes of India. Amongst this class there is no natural deficiency of intellect, and every opportunity is afforded them of acquiring proficiency in the plain and useful departments of knowledge, at the numerous schools established at Port Louis. Amongst the shop-keepers of the *Mestiza* family, I have invariably observed a civility, and even a polish of manner, which are rarely found amongst the European or pure creole tradesmen. They evince, however, more or less, the indolence which is generated by a warm

voluptuous climate, and an insular narrowness of mind, which is unmoved by subjects of foreign and universal interest, and to which the state of the sugar market and the petty conflicts of their compatriot politicians, afford a sufficient and ample arena.

* If their morals are far from immaculate, allowances should be made, not only for the force of example, in those above as well as those below them, but also for the sleepless consciousness of being regarded in some degree as an inferior mongrel race by the pure white creoles, and the consequent sentiment of self-degradation to which that consciousness will almost invariably give birth. For myself I do not think that moralists have sufficiently insisted on the injurious and fatal results to individuals of an unduly low estimation of themselves. The force of precept, the subtlety of analysis, the illustration of example, have been successively taxed to expose the tragic issues of anger, jealousy, the lust of praise, and pride, that sin of angelic natures; yet, were the forbidding progress of many hardened profligates and deep-died criminals traced to their primal source, it would, I think, be discovered, that the first cause of their ruin was not the undue preponderance of revenge, cruelty, avarice, or any other of the great passions, but simply an unworthy, and degraded estimate of their individual nature. They set out in life with a careless irreverence for their own reputation, a distrust in their innate moral energies, and a morbid belief that they are so utterly insignificant in the sight of God and their fellow-creatures, that it matters little of what complexion is the spirit of their dream. They are thus open to the approaches of temptation to which they speedily

succumb without presenting even the ineffectual resistance which the good but feeble Blanc of Voltaire does to the sturdier evil genius, Ebene. Imperceptibly they graduate from follies to vices, and from vices to crimes; till, too late discovering that returning were as tedious as going on, they pursue their downward career with a blind, wilful desperation, till roused too late by the tardy trumpet-notes of conscience, to them, perchance,

“ That juggling fiend, that never spake before,

And cried, ‘ I warned thee’ when the deed is o’er.”

But to return to the mulattos. In spite of the late influx into the island of revolutionary sentiments, the prejudices against this class have abated little of their pristine violence. The stain of illegitimacy and the obloquy which attaches, in a greater or less degree, to the mixed offspring of the white and the sable, the civilized and the savage, will account for a part, but not the whole of this deep and seemingly ineradicable prepossession; but its larger and weightier proportion must be referred to the iron-hand of slavery. The knowledge that such a person’s father or grandfather, one of three hundred head on such an estate, died a master’s lash with his blood, it is this that has placed so wide a gulph of contempt and dislike between the whites and the mestizas.

By a singular accident or oversight at a public assembly given last winter in Port Louis, a young man, who had a slight transfusion of African blood in his veins, so slight, however, that it would not have been perceptible to any but those acquainted with his genealogy, was accepted as a partner in a contre danse and waltz by a young French lady of Port Louis. He was, from all that I could discover, good-

looking, well-educated and well-mannered, and the young lady probably left the ball room with a tolerably favourable opinion of her unknown partner. Her blissful ignorance was soon, however, dispelled, by the appearance of a dear intimate, who, doubtless from motives of the tenderest consideration, revealed to her the blasting fact, that her agreeable partner on that never-to-be-forgotten night, was a "mestiza."

As may be anticipated, the young lady went into hysterics, and first the family and then the family doctor were called in, various remedies were administered with little effect; and the commiseration of her relations, who felt that they had contracted a collateral stain from their kinsmaids involuntary error, was in no degree calculated to soothe her wounded feelings. For four or five days, she would taste no solid food, but wept, and sobbed, and raved, and wished that she had never been born, and in short, rehearsed to the life the rule of Jephtha's daughter.

The mulattees are remarkable as a race for their fine physical proportions. Their features are often handsome, and they have generally good eyes, teeth, and hair; the smallness of their feet and ankles are proverbial. Their gait is superb, and may challenge comparison with that of,

"The Andalusian girl from mass returning."

To not a few of them will the portrait of Cressida apply:

"There's language in her eyes, her cheek, her lips.

Nay, her foot speaks: her wanton spirits look out

At every joint and motion of her body."

Austere virtue, it may be presumed, is not one of their prevailing characteristics. The sport of circumstances,

and the victims of prejudice, they view a liaison with a blanc as infinitely more reputable than a marriage with one of their own class. It would, at the same time, be injustice to deny that they regard such an engagement as almost tantamount to marriage, and, with a few exceptions, manifest a fidelity in these illicit attachments, which would not discredit the votaries of hymen. A tranquillity and external decency reign at night in the capital of the Mauritius, unaccountable to those who have heard so much of creole immorality; and the groups and scenes, which disgrace the cities of England, are unknown and unwitnessed in Port Louis. Whether "vice by losing all its grossness loses half its evil," is an argument which I leave to be contested by the admirers and adversaries of Mr. Burke, it would have been a subject admirably adapted for the acute analyzing, dispassionate Bayle the γεφεληγερετας of Polemics, who assembles so many, and equally weighty demonstrations on the antagonist sides of the question, that he leaves his bewildered reader in a situation analogous to that of the schoolman's ass, and with an equal likelihood of making a speedy decision.

June 15th.—The last week has been spent in the Plaine de Wilhems, and chiefly occupied by visits to the neighbouring planters and landed proprietors. I observe a marked difference in the demeanour and manners of the planters, who are generally old men, or who have, at least, begun to descend the inclined plane of life, and the young merchants and avocats of Port Louis. The former have the courtesy, polish, and slightly measured ceremonials of the old school, relieved by an indigenous creole cordiality, and what-

ever be their private opinions on politics, they abstain from breaking out in invective against "the authorities that be," and the British legislators who have originated some of the late unpopular enactments. The *Joues Gens* of Port Louis, on the contrary, are rather distinguished for an obtrusive brusquerie of manner, unmeasured abuse of the present constituted order of things, and the English lawgivers, and by an ill-disguised antipathy against the *Anglais* in general. I remarked, moreover, a contented and domestic air in the menage of the habitants' houses which is not apparent in the city; a home character which from the force of national prepossessions, I was scarcely prepared to find in a French family.

It is impossible, too, to disguise from oneself, that the truly polite French possess the happy art of making their guest instantaneously at home, of at once putting the most diffident of morning visitors perfectly at ease. This is the result of their tact, their "*bon hommie*," (I am unable to find an exact synonyme for this quality in our language) and the graceful facility with which they render voice, manner, gestures, and intellectual powers, all subsidiary to pleasing the social companion of the hour. It is this, that constitutes the most important department in the *Scavoir vivre*, and there is little room for surprise in the fact, that they should excel us in a branch of study, which, as a nation, we comparatively neglect. But in the name of good sense and candour, let us vindicate ourselves from the charges of rudeness and incivility, by an honest and less questionable mode than that of recrimination; nor let us, by a cynical perversion of language, make the "*politesse*" of our neighbours synonymous with

insincerity. Insincerity ! and is there less intrinsic insincerity in the salons of London than of Paris ? That it is less effective in the former than in the latter, I admit, inasmuch as the gay, mobile and plastic character of the Gaul, supplies a happier materiel for the actor than the grave, monotonous, unimpressible nature of the Briton. By the faithful imitation of the one, we may be temporarily deluded, but the absence of vraisemblance in the representation of the other, will seldom excuse our self-deception. But who, in good earnest, are the victims of such deception ? None but the incorrigibly credulous, and—"few and far between"—some rare specimens of Sabine innocence. I confess that I have no sympathy to lavish on the man who, won by a pleasing face, insinuating manners, and a few warm expressions of predilection, instantaneously erects the altar of an ideal friendship, which, when afterwards desecrated by the forgetfulness or neglect of his fancied Pirithous, he devotes to the avenging Nemesis, and like another Timon, "flies from while he hates mankind." Without subscribing to the heartless and withering axiom of Hobbes, that "words are the counters of wise men, but the coin of fools," let us estimate conventional phraseology at its current value, let us remember that there are many facts and opinions, which (as society is at present constituted) require the disguise of a more or less opaque drapery: let us peruse once more that elegant, and useful tale of Madame de Genlis, "The Palace of Truth," and let us regard with an indulgent forbearance "*le monde comme il va.*"

June 19th.—Received a visit this morning from Monsieur —. He is an elderly gentleman, with the manners of the "*vieille cour*," much native intelligence, and united to a quick discriminative taste, a

memory stocked with the best portion of the best French authors of the "seventeenth" and "eighteenth" centuries. What I was glad to observe in him was, that he was no sectarian in literature, no bigotted worshipper of one or two great geniuses, who, that the idols of his adoration might enjoy a triumphal procession, would consent that all the rest of the "immortal band" should be dragged at their chariot-wheels, or at least like the harnessed kings of Sesostris, should draw their car in a servile ovation. Monsieur — could admire the sublime traits and thrilling declamation of Corneille, and yet, after some little hesitation, confer the plan on his rival Racine for his superior excellence in the dramatic consistent individuality of his characters, his exquisite pathos, his rhythmical harmony, and his magical mastery of language; nor did his intense admiration of Iphigenie, Mithridate, and Athalie, blind him to the peculiar and more unfettered beauties of the author of "Mahomet and Zaire." In doing full justice to the massive good sense, acute discrimination, graphic terseness, and pungent satire of Boileau, he did not bigottedly adopt his strong prejudices, nor echo the burthen of the "Della Cruscan" choir against the injured author of the "Jerusalem delivered;" and, while evincing an enthusiastic attachment for the sagacious, witty, playful, tender, naive La Fontaine, he whose province peculiarly it was,

"To snatch a grace beyond the reach of art,"

he would dwell with a more subdued pleasure upon the pointed pleasantries and graceful buoyant-wit of the elegant but less natural Fontenelle.

He had evidently a quicker discernment for beauties than for faults, and his taste, as evidenced by the

selection of passages from his favourite authors, was, at least in my opinion, lively and correct.

In one respect he was certainly a "*laudator temporis acti*," and as the Scotch grey-beards, pointing out the Douglas cast to their children,

"Moralize on the decay
Of Scottish strength in the modern day,"

so he, when contrasting the age of his country's "Intellectual Titans," with French literature as it is, feelingly lamented the decline of taste, and the dearth of genius. A few illustrious names, De La Martine, Beranger, and Chateaubriand, he would separate from their cotemporaries; as for the rest, they might share the fate of Don Quixote's condemned Library. He allowed that Victor Hugo had extraordinary intellectual powers; but said, he could not forgive him his misapplication of those powers, and he estimated at a very moderate price the vaunted and popular productions of Pigault Le Baun, and the *pure* Paul de Kock. He was at a loss, whether these writers had been most successful in undermining their countrymen's morality, or vitiating their country's idiom. As for his politics, they seemed to be those of an enlightened man, anxious for the diffusion of education and virtue; but no believer in the demagogue doctrine of Egalite, and with an imagination uninflamed by anticipations of a moral Millenium. He looked forward with distrust and misgiving to the impending measure of slave emancipation, a new state for which he sincerely thought the "noirs" were not yet fitted, either morally or mentally. It was easy, to say to the slave, "be free;" but it was another thing to endow him with the knowledge, the sobriety, the prudence, to make a right use of the precious privilege. He adverted to

the present "affranchis," notoriously the most worthless, idle, and dissipated of the black population in the island. "Was it fitting" he observed "that men, with the understandings of children, and the vices of convicts, habituated and moulded to a state of dependence and subjection, should be abruptly admitted to the rights of citizenship, and the boon of uncontrolled freedom?" As Monsieur had himself, but lately filled the office of a "judge special," or slave protector, his opinion is entitled to more than common consideration.

June 24th.—During my ride to Port Louis this morning, met a number of Indian convicts repairing the "Plaine de Wilhems" road. A large majority amongst them are sepoys, and though they have nothing to complain of on the score of food or clothing, and are compelled to admit the salubrity of the island, air and water, they retain their patriotic predilections in their original force, and unceasingly yearn for the arid, dusty, dooab; or the rank, luxuriant paddy-fields of Bengal. They are delighted to meet with any one who can speak to them in their native language.

The road on which they were employed, the principal one in the Mauritius, connecting as it does Port Louis and Mahebourg, is highly creditable to their exertions. Material is profusely supplied them in the masses of basalt, which here protrude from the soil in all directions, and broken into minute fragments, are bound together into a smooth solid mass by the transit of carts and carriages. The tropical rains here, moreover, are neither of sufficient violence or duration to impair, as in India, the labours of the dry season.—Dined at Mr. —. While dressing, after dinner, to spend the evening with a French family, I was half-angry and half-amused with the fluent familiarity of one of Mr. —'s creole blacks. He was assisting

me in my toilette, and having somehow or other ascertained whither I was going, addressed me in the following words :—" Ah ! Monsieur, vous ce n'avez pas vu encore Mademoiselle—mais vous la verrez soir. Elle est tres jolie, bien mise, bien spirituelle, je vous assure, elle joue sur la harpe a merveille, elle chante comme un ange. Ah ! Monsieur (and here he bowed sentimentally) c'est une demoiselle tout a fait charmante." I felt half inclined to knock the fellow down for his easy impudence ; but it was impossible to resist the half-serious, half-comic expression of his countenance, and I found relief in a burst of laughter. Here I may remark, that Eveille (and the name was singularly appropriate,) was unusually intelligent and adroit, and prided himself on speaking French with tolerable purity. He avoided the atrocities of " D'ou vous venez ?" and " ces zens la," and the other perversions of grammar, and pronunciation common in the patois of the noirs, and I doubt not that if education and fortune had been equally benignant to him, as the " Scapins and Mascarilles" of the immortal Moliere, he would have shared with those *great men* the laurels of successful finesse, and sublime roguery.

July 5th.—Started this morning in company with Mr. —, on an excursion through the eastern and southern portions of the island.

We had provided ourselves with letters of introduction to the French "habitans" on our route. Having dispatched our grooms with our "malles" at day-break to Monsieur G—, in the St. Pierre district, our quarters for the night, we left my house in the plain of Williams, about seven o'clock, and, after three quarters of an hour's rapid riding through a drizzling Scotch mist, arrived at the residence of Mr. May, of Palma, who received us with the proverbial hospitality of a

Mauritius planter. He is proprietor of an extensive sugar-state, and in the coffee-growing days of the island, the fame of the Palma berry had penetrated to the London market. Mr. May pointed out to me a strip of sugar-plantation, which had been laid under cane for fifty consecutive years; and, if the appearance of the crop was not so floridly exuberant as in some other plantations, still there were no symptoms of exhaustion, or even delicacy, so vast are the resources of this volcanic soil. About noon we resumed our journey, and after a leisurely ride of about four hours through a rich and smiling district, we arrived at the picturesque seat of Monsieur Geneve. The precincts of the house display a culture and luxuriancy of bloom, which are rarely apparent in the vicinity of a creble habitation; the site is exquisite, and would equally besit a Grecian temple, a Gothic abbey, or the elegant and composite mansion of an English nobleman. At a short distance to the rear of the house, a wooded hill abruptly rises, which affords a favourite covert to the island deer.

Over the hill, and stretching to the southward, a noble mountain range extends; its eminences on the present occasion being masked with dun clouds, while a clear and sinuous river traverses the grounds, embouching into the sea near a small military station a mile and a half distant. An avenue of superb tamarind-trees, nearly three quarters of a mile in extent, composes the finest natural vista I have ever seen, and a perfect wilderness of Bengal citron and lemon-trees, about twenty acres in extent, carries one's imagination to the land of "Wilhem-Meister."

"Know ye the land where the lemon trees bloom?"

Where the gold orange glows through the thicket's deep gloom?"

Monsieur Geneve was from home, but we were

cordially welcomed by his son, who is settled with his wife and family on his father's estate. It is not uncommon, I hear, in this island, for three or four sons, or sons-in-law, with their wives and families, to inhabit each their separate pavillon, on the old people's estate, meeting at breakfast and dinner round the family board. With whatever inconveniences this custom may be fraught, there is something patriarchal about it, which speaks volumes for the amiability and forbearance of the French creoles, as it rarely, if ever, gives birth to mean jealousies and disgraceful dissensions. Yet I should be loath to recommend such an example for imitation to my countrymen. Their inflexible prejudices, their unductile manners, their very virtues carried to excess, their reserve, their love of privacy and exclusion, their exacting spirit of independence, their pride reluctant to incur obligations, even from the nearest and dearest, present and will present till the individualities of national character have been smoothed down on the grinding stone of cosmopolitanism, essential and durable objections to the expediency of an identical arrangement. Young Geneve (a rare instance in a Mauritius creole, who generically is the most uninquisitive and unlocomotive of the sons of Eve,) has been a wanderer through many lands. When a young man, in company with two or three other compatriots, he received a commission from Lord Hastings in India, a return to some of the chief inhabitants of the island for civilities and hospitalities received by the Marquess *en route* to Calcutta. Soon tiring of the army, he took to the sea, and, after various cruising in the bay of Bengal and the Persian gulf, and the seas that wash Ternate and Tidore, he settled down as an indigo planter in Bengal. In consequence, however, of the inordinate predominance of

inundations, and sickly markets, over bumper seasons, he abandoned this uncertain profession, and, after a varied and adventurous career, has subsided into the settled habits and monotonous occupations of a creole habitant. With the sun-burnt features and somewhat of the blunt address of a sailor, he unites much natural intelligence, and a fair proficiency in English. An officer from the corps stationed at Flac, made an addition to the dinner party, which consisted, besides my *compagnon de voyage* and myself, of young Geneve, his wife, and sister-in-law. Col. — is a man of pleasing manners and an ardent sportsman. He gives me rather a favourable account of the Gibier in this district. Partridge, quail, wild guinea-fowl, and hares, are pretty numerous, but good dogs are absolutely indispensable, and the wooded broken character of the country is unfavourable to the final returns of the day. Monsieur Geneve informed me, that deer were numerous in the adjoining woods, but there is nothing very “entrainant” in his description of the mode of this island sport. The nois rouse the game, and endeavour to drive it to particular points where the sportsmen are stationed; but such is the glorious uncertainty of the sport, owing to the inequalities of surface, and the denseness of the coverts, that the sanguine novice, after preserving “from noon to dewy eve” the immobility of a sentinel at his post, is sometimes compelled to retire bootless home, without having even heard the rustling of an antler in the parasite, matted thicket.

July 6th.—This morning we left Monsieur Geneve’s after breakfast, and pursued our route through the romantic St. Pierre district. It is in this district, on the banks of the Reviere Noir, that “Paul and Virginia” interceded for the unfortunate negress with her cruel master. The distance hither from their mountain

"region" and back again, which is accomplished in one day, can be little short of sixty miles, a feat much more consonant with the pedestrian reputation of Captains Ross and Barclay, than that of two fairy creole children. Such a geographical inaccuracy, however, will elicit no harsh comment from those who are capable of appreciating the singular merits of the eloquent and pathetic St. Pierre. As, if I may dare to compare the weeping willow with the giant, Druid Oak, our admiration for the author of "Falstaff," "Imogen," "Iago," and "Ariel," loses not one gloss of its vividness, from the consciousness that he has annihilated space to make two lovers happy, and transported "Bohemia" to the margin of the "Ocean stream." After journeying southward for about two hours, we deviated from the route to the "Morne" to visit the celebrated falls of the "Chamarella." A tedious and gradual corkscrew ascent brought us at length to the campagne of a Monsieur Sebere; distant about half a mile from the "velino" of the "Mauritius." He was fortunately at home, and volunteered to be our "cicerone" on the occasion. I despair of being able to convey a faithful picture of the superb scene that opened on our view, when emerging from a low coppice, we found ourselves on the brim of the table-land from which the "Chamarelle" precipitates itself. An ancient rock-rooted tree, drooping over the lip of the cataract, afforded us a dizzy footing, and enabled us to trace the waterfall in its headlong descent of nearly five hundred feet, into the wildest and most romantic of volcanic glens. The mountain stream quits the summit of the cliff in two distinct sheets of water, which unite about half way down the descent, and the cloud of incense-like spray created by the rebound of the torrent from the chasm into which it is flung, formed,

during our visit, the base of a many-coloured iris,

Like hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn
 " It steady dies ; while all round is torn
 By the distracted waters, bears serene
 Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn :
 Resembling, mid the torture of the scene,
 Love watching madness with unalterable mien."

From the deep, clear basin into which the mountain stream is precipitated, it pursues its course, now with a gradual, tranquil majesty, now with a petulant, noisy vehemence

" Crested with tanny foam
 Like the nake of a chesnut steed."

The abrupt sides of the valley, which impend over the Chamarelle, are clothed with the luxuriant forests of the tropics, whose dark and dense foliage is relieved by the light verdure of innumerable lianas, which link shaft to shaft with their natural and graceful tapestry. The-table land, from which the stream takes its source, is girdled on all sides by the superior portions of mountain groups, being itself above 1,500 feet above the sea level; and there is neither smoke, nor cottage, nor domestic herds, ripening crops, nor cultivation to remind one of man's presence, or suggest an association discordant with the individual, isolated beauty, the solemn yet not savage sublimity of this peerless cataract. It is a scene worthy of the pencil of Salvator, and needed but a few Tuscan columns gleaming from the lurid shade on the skirts of the valley, or a group of swarthy bandits in the security of sylvan recreation, to have assimilated it to the noblest ideal that ever glowed on his animated canvas. Some exquisite "points de vue" were presented to us, as, descending the mountain, we turned our eyes from the shaggy mountains and glens of the interior to the more open country gently sloping to the sea-shore, and followed the picturesque indentations

of the coast, the bold headlands and the tiny cocoa-crowned "spots of greening" in the sheltered creeks to the far horizon line of the blue ocean, then "slumbering like an o'er wearied child." At about 5 P.M. we reached the hospitable dwelling of Monsieur Cologne, who received us with the most unequivocal cordiality. His "Sigour" is situated on the skirts of the Morne bold, bleak, mountain peninsula. The robust and ruddy appearance of Monsieur and Madame Cologne, and four or five happy children, spoke volumes in favour of the salubrity of this part of the island, where the clear, bracing south-wind blows almost without intermission. Monsieur Cologne is not a sugar-planter, but derives a handsome revenue from a large herd of creole cows, and a productive fishery. I am, on the whole, somewhat captivated with the patriarchal ménage and simple manners of this amiable couple, and cannot avoid contrasting the tranquil, healthful, contented tenour of their existence in this secluded spot with the feverish bustle, political acrimony, and prevailing dissoluteness of "Port Louis."

July 7.—After breakfast having bid adieu to this "family Robinson Crusoe," who seemed inclined to use a gentle violence in order to detain us for the day, we commenced our journey towards Belle Ombre. Our route for the most part lay along the sea-beach, where our steeds picked their slow and painful way, through broken masses of rock and fragments of coral, though we were often obliged to wade our horses through the surf in order to avoid impervious thickets of a resinous underwood (used for flambeaux by the negroes) which frequently covers the strand to the tide-line.

As we thus rode along, our voices were almost drowned in the respiteless thunder of the waves, as

they broke and chafed themselves into vast jets of dazzling foam, on the dense girdle of coral reefs which almost completely encircles this island of hurricanes.

The trade-wind was blowing freshly, and from the white wall of foam which projected from the coral about half a mile to seaward, our clothes and faces were bedewed with flakes of salt spray.

Where the abrupt nature of the shore, and depth of water compelled us to diverge inland, we had little reason to congratulate ourselves on the change. The tracks (for roads they could not honestly be designated) were slippery from recent rain, and carried with an irregular contempt of fractures and contusions up and down the high cheek-bones of basalt hills, were formidable to any but a Swiss or a Chamois; and, though we had taken the precaution of dismounting and showing our horses the way with loose bridles, they were guilty of more than one *faux pas*. About half way from Belle Ombre, we halted at the habitation of a Monsieur Bigro. His house is situated on the banks of a clear, sinuous creek, a feeder of the azure sea winding itself between wooded cliffs, and glades mirrored on its pellucid surface, one of the hundred

“ *Pezzi di cielo caduti in terra* ”

sown over the bosom of this lovely island. At about two hours before the sun set, we arrived at Belle Ombre, the seat of Monsieur Demaresque. In the absence of the *père de famille* and his daughter, a *fiancé* and one of the *savanne belles*, we were cordially welcomed by young Demaresque. The *lucus à non lucendo* principle has not been consulted in the nomenclature of this pretty demesne. The spacious mansion, extensive offices, sheltering wood in the rear,

and open expanse of lawn in the front of the house, give something of an English character to Belle Ombre. The builder and former proprietor was a Mr. Telfare, an English capitalist.* In his choice of the site, however, he appears rather to have consulted his taste for the beautiful than *les beaux yeux de sa cassette*. The savanne, with a thousand attractions for the painter and the poet, is deficient in the less ostentatious, but sterling virtues which are prized by the planter and farmer.

The soil is cold and poor, compared with that of other districts, and the produce of the cane per arpent, is scarcely a third of that in the Poudre D'Or and Kempart districts, in addition to which the manufactured sugar is of an inferior quality, gritty and deficient in saccharine matter. Mr. Telfare's sugar, coffee, and other agricultural speculations, to which zeal, capital, and the appliances of mechanical invention were devoted, were far from successful, and through the ordinary channels of disappointment, distress, involvement, and final insolvency, he illustrated the progress of the unsuccessful projector. Belle Ombre, formerly enjoyed the reputation of a show spot, and was, in consequence, visited by "Holman," the blind traveller during his sojourn in the Isle of France. Our French host described him as an intelligent, inquisitive person, with a tinge of egotism and a cheerful equable temper. His other senses have been so extraordinarily sharpened and subtilized by the privation of sight, that he feels much less than might be at first imagined the severe calamity of

"Knowledge at one entrance quite shut out ;"

and so little did his air, gait, and demeanour correspond with those of a blind man, that I have met

with two or three obstinate sceptics, whose opinions are now in a state of equipoise as to whether Mr. Holman saw or not.

July 8th.—Early this morning left Monsieur Demaresque's, and breakfasted with Monsieur and Madame Beaulieu, of Jacquelin. Monsieur Beaulieu is of a noble French family, and was formerly in the French navy, having fought under "Villeneuve" at Trafalgar. He is an intelligent, communicative man, and speaks English with correctness and fluency. Miss Amanda Jordon, Madame Beaulieu's daughter, by a former marriage, is a pretty girl with regular features, brilliant eyes, a delicate complexion, and small white aristocratic hands that would have set Tremaine a raving. The family were on the eve of departure for Port Louis, where they intend passing the winter. Leaving Monsieur Beaulieu's, we proceeded to Monsieur Dupin's, of Surinam, where we dined and took up our quarters for the night. The factory of which Monsieur Dupin is a superintendent, is commodiously situated near the *embouchure* of a river *vis-a-vis* to the military post of a Somilac. The scenery of the Savannee is markedly distinguished from that of Moka, and the Plain of Williams. Though there is more of seclusion and unsophisticated nature in that of the former, owing to the comparative rarity of houses and plantations, yet the character of the landscape is in some respects of a gentler and softer tone.

The mountains of this district, instead of the angular, peaked, and partially denuded profile of the Pouce, the Peterbolt, &c. are distinguished by an undulating contour, and are generally covered to their summits with umbrageous forests. The Savannee, moreover, reveals considerable sketches of grassy plain,

particularly near the sea-shore, and is comparatively free from those rugged piles of rock, abrupt ravines, and lava-scooped caverns, which frequently occur in the midst of cultivation. Negro camps, and the smoking funnels of the sugar factory stamp an expression of wildness and neglect on the more fertile and better populated districts in the island.

July 9th.—This morning left Surinam for the auberge of "Curepipe," distant about sixteen miles. As the rain set in strongly and relentlessly soon after our departure from Monsieur Dupin's, my fellow voyager and I were thoroughly *mouilles jusqu'à v'os*, ere we reached the solitary forest inn. The inn, if such it can be called, is kept by a Mrs. Cochrane, of Dutch extraction, the most independent, crabbed, and cantankerous of land-ladies. Her temper was in no degree ameliorated by the villainous state of the weather, and we were not a little apprehensive, that we should be obliged to make a forcible entry into a place of entertainment for man and horse, for the nearest human habitation was about two leagues distant. The mistress of the inn at length opened her doors to us, and, having exchanged our dripping for dry habiliments, we ordered dinner and beds, as the lesser of two evils, for the day was now far advanced, and the demon of showers was reigning unresisted through the wide Curepipe forest. Though our fare was coarse and our resting places indifferent, we ate as heartily and slept as soundly as if the first had been the Cœnœ Suculli and the second the Plumec Sardanapali.

July 10th.—At sunrise this morning, we left the inhospitable auberge and weeping climate of Curepipe. My companion assured me, that this was the sixth visit he had paid this ill-omened cabarat, and never with a

dry skin. They tell me that a Bengallee selected this place for his residence: I suppose from its being the highest inhabited spot on the island, and, what is still more wonderful, resided there for three months. *Chacun à son goût*; for my own part, I should think a ten years' residence in rainy Rosshire or Newfoundland, where the fog seldom or never rises, quite an indispensable preparative for a sejour at Curepipe. The rain cleared up just before we mounted our horses, but it was only for a brief interval, and we only saved ourselves from a second drenching by cantering rapidly through the forest; for when we were well out of the wood and enjoying fair weather in the Plain of Williams, we looked back and had the satisfaction of seeing the Curepipe forest shrowded with drizzling vapours. Curepipe is proverbial for the continuous humidity of its climate, like other high-wooded tracts, enacting the part of a conductor to all unappropriated clouds and vapours that may be floating in its vicinity. Even in the lowlands of the island a wood possesses, in an interior degree, the same rain-attracting virtues, and, I was informed, a few days since, by a trust-worthy authority, that, in the windward quarter of the island, where there is a deficiency of timber, on a planter intimating his intention of cutting down a wood, and clearing the ground for cane, the other "habitans" came forward in a body, and offered to indemnify him at his own valuation for the profits he would forego by not putting his design in execution, so apprehensive were they that the demolition of this wood would deprive them of their accustomed showers. Of the native productions of the Curepipe forest, perhaps the most peculiar are the ebony and fern-tree. The former is distinguished by a tall crooked trunk covered with a dead

cinder-coloured bark, and surmounted by a tuft of sable foliage. When the ebony is young, only a tiny black speck is perceptible in the centre of the shaft, which is of a pale yellow colour; but, as the tree advances in age, the black circle proportionally expands. The Mauritius ebony is considered first rate.

. I was much struck with the delicate, feathery grace of the yew-tree, also common, I hear, to New South Wales. It attains the altitude of twenty-five or thirty feet, and is just the gross fern expanded to gigantic dimensions; such as may have grown in Brobdignag, in the skirts of Glumdalclitch's garden.

The wild raspberry, loving a cool and humid climate, is more abundant and luxuriant here than in any other part of the island, in size and colour rivaling the English; it is very inferior in flavour, resembling the raspberry of England about as faithfully as the sweet lime of India does the St. Michael orange. The Cénessipe is also the favourite region of the creepers and the climbers, in which productions the Mauritius may challenge comparison with any other country, for variety, redundancy, and the rich contrasts of floral tints. Amongst the individualities of Mauritius woodland scenery, I must not omit the dearth of singing birds, which imparts a solemn and melancholy tone to these luxuriant solitudes. It is strange, that though there still exist numerous descendants of the whiskered squadrons that drove the Dutch out of the island, (here surely must have been the site of La Fontaine's Ratapolis,) the crow and the sparrow, those contented cosmopolites, are not to be found in this exclusive island.—At about 9 P. M. we reached my house in the Plain of Williams.

July 21st.—Rode down to Port Louis. Went this evening, to a soirée at Madame——'s. The party consisted of about eighty people, a world too many for the small, air-tight saloon to which they were restricted. The closeness of the room, however, seemed to be no check on the vivacity of the fair Mauriciens, who, I believe, in their dread of being Eurhumes would take shelter in an exhausted receiver. Seldom have I been in a situation in which I should have been more alive to the value of Mrs. Brulgruddery's largess to Mary of "a little air." Yet waltze, quadrille, and gallop succeeded each other with the briefest of possible intervals, the crieur with his hoarse voice, prompting the various évolutions of the figure. L'Eté, Balancez—in my opinion a most officious addition to the evening gaieties, obtruding on one's attention, very superfluously, the mechanism of the dance, and interrupting the continuity of conversation. The other creole custom of asking a lady to dance without the preliminaries of introduction, might, I think, be advantageously transplanted to the northern side of the equator. It would have a most sensible effect in diminishing the solitary wall-flowers, and the famous youths, who certainly do not add to the hilarity of an Anglo-Indian assembly. Here there were no unproductive social labourers, the few, and they were chiefly elderly gentlemen, who did not dance, being absorbed by the écarté tables.

July 31st.—Attended at ——'s marriage, a threefold process; first, the contract before the civil notary, then the solemnization in the Roman Catholic Church, and lastly, the rite according to the Protestant form. The unmarried is a much less complicated business: the

married parties, on stating that they are tired of each other's company, or that their dispositions are un congenial, can immediately obtain a writ of legal separation from the constituted authorities. So man puts asunder whom God hath joined ! It, of course, frequently happens that the divorced meet at dinners and soireés subsequent to their separation, and a second and more agreeable union, and the bonhommie and politeness with which four parties so circumstanced communicate with each other, is truly edifying, and might win approbation even from Beppo's incomparable sposa. After the ceremony, there was the usual interminable meal, the alpha of which was breakfast, and the omega dinner ; and the redundant health-drinking and the hip ! hip ! hurrah ! shouting, which, however it might harmonize with the martial notions of the Iroquois, when rushing on the enemy from their forest ambush, would be discarded with horror by that polite nation, when smoking the calumet of peace or sharing in the social festival. In the evening adjourned, with two or three others, to the theatre. Saw "le Duc de Reichstadt." The role of le fils de l'homme was acted by Madame Hortense, with much judgment and feeling. That illustrious boy's memory is absolutely idolized by the French, but with their incurable anti-Austrian prejudices, they accuse Maria Louisa of being accessory to his death, and as if hereditary consumption were insufficient to explain his premature end, the son's posset is drugged by a mother's hand !

August 6th.—Dined with a neighbour : tasted for the first time the cabbage-palm. A tree of four or five years of age, be it noted, is cut down for a salad without the plea of necessity which Paul and Virginia might have tendered.

August 9th.—Dined this evening at Monsieur — : a large party, and excellent but profuse dinner. In verity the French appetite is prodigious. I have seen a gentleman at Port Louis, commence with a whet of about thirty oysters, and, after paying his devoirs with zealous impartiality to bouillons, coteletts, consommés, custard, turkeys, and pastry, wind up with the third of a tureen of salad, the heterogeneous components of the meal being accompanied with *pain à discretion*, which translated into English, means a quantity not less than a pound and a half, and not more than two pounds of bread. On the present occasion the majority of the French guests nobly sustained their trencher reputation.

The inimitable Major Dalgetty himself, who, when provand was good and abundant, invariably took the precaution of victualling himself for three days, need not have blushed to have entered the lists with such rivals. The creoles, however, are not contented with eating themselves, unless they are at the same time the cause of making others eat, and truly it requires a good deal of dogged decision to resist the pressing solicitations of the good-natured host and hostess, not to omit proving the various viands and cates on their hospitable board. I myself being on the moderate tack was upbraided by a fair Mauricienne, for being so neglectful of the creature comforts around me. “ Ah, Monsieur ! j’ai peur que vous êtes malade, vous mangez absolument comme un oiseau.” Not, (reader, be assured) of the cormorant or vulture species. An acquaintance and compatriot of mine, either from politesse or a reluctance to compromise the reputation of the English, made marvellous exertions to win golden opinions from the islanders, or, to speak more

plainly, consumed, on the present occasion, about three times his ordinary dinner rations, but, alas! without producing the desired result. "Impar congressus," it was the frog endeavouring to distend itself to the bulk of the ox. He was resting from his labours, and, from the expression of his countenance, I should not have deemed that, like *Candide*, he found life most tolerable after meals. "Au contraire," he seemed to be tasting in anticipation the horrors of a night of indigestion. It was at this crisis that a portly, elderly habitant, who had been expatiating over some forty dishes, and whose internal organization must have borne a striking resemblance to that of a *Chowringhee* "adjutant," turned on my countryman a glance in which pity and contempt were prevailing for mastery. "Diable, Monsieur, vous ne faites rien."

Those who are fond of French cookery, have ample opportunities for gratifying their taste at the mansions of the hospitable Mauritius habitants. For myself, and I believe I am not singular, the generality of their dishes smack too much of the olive-yard.

Amongst the luxuries of the Mauritius, I should not omit to make mention of the gourmet, a delicious fish originally brought from China, and now naturalized in the tanks, and streams of the Mauritius. Its flavour to those who have not tasted it is like the mangoe amongst fruits—indescribable. I am only surprised that some enterprising *bon vivant* of India has not endeavoured to acclimate it in that country. Though good clarets and champagnes are procurable in the Mauritius, the wine commonly consumed is of an inferior description, being for the most part the *vin ordinaire* of Provence, which has been sold in Port Louis

at the low price of seventeen and eighteen dollars the cask. One who has tasted coffee at the house of a Mauritius habitant, will have little inclination to renew his acquaintance with the washy, or greasy, or turbid fluid, which is dispensed under that name from the English breakfast table.

Tea, I have only seen on one or two occasions at a French house, and then it was brought in as a compliment to *Les Anglais*, and was as tasteless and flavourless as hay-water, with them it is known merely as a *sisan*.

August 11th.—Rode down to Port Louis this morning, breakfasted at Masse's hotel with a large party of invalids from Madras and Bombay, bound, some for the Cape and some for Australia. They seem any thing but "*epris*" with Port Louis, and small blame to them, as Paddy would say. The city itself is invariably five or six degrees hotter than any other part of the island, the shop-keepers are nonchalans, and often absolutely insolent; the prices of most articles are exorbitant; the accommodation at the best inn is but indifferent; the attendants careless, and the interior economy in some respects slovenly and dirty.

There is, moreover, a great dearth of public amusements or even places of public resort. The theatre is an exception; but to those who do not understand the language well, its attractions can be but meagre. "*There is no longer a Prado,*" the resort of the better classes, and the hard basalt roads leading to Pamplemousse and the Plain of Williams, present few inducements to the equestrian. By far the greater majority of those who visit the Mauritius instal themselves in Port Louis, form few acquaintanceships

with their own country-men, and none with the French, relieve or endeavour to relieve the monotony of an hotel life by the alternations of the reading-room and the billiard table, duly as the sun sets, with a "thank God the day is done," saunter to the once "recherché" champs de mars, to observe the sports of the creole children or the mestiza gradations of colour in their attendants; returning from their evening stroll, discuss the same succession of dishes in the same gaily papered apartment, and assisted by potations of thin claret or thick porter, occupy their listless fancies by contemplating the adventures of some "Orlando Furioso," Paladin depicted in glaring colours on the walls of the salon, a wild medley of island castles, intricate thickets, crook-bearing shepherds, armed cap-a-pie knights, griffin mounted wizards, and damsels reposing by flower-fringed fountains, till "tired nature's sweet restorer" wraps them in oblivion, and they wake from some flattering dream to see the apparition of candles flickering in their sockets, and a hideous negress, who, with a hoarse accent and patois idiom, reminds them that it is time to retire to their chamber.

How far such an experience qualifies for deciding on the merits of the Isle of France, it is for me to submit, and others to judge.

20th. August.—Port Louis. Dined this evening at —; adjourned to the theatre. The pieces were "Les fautes Rabelais" and "Monsieur Chapillard." The former has little to recommend it on the score of talent or morality; the ingredients are startling situations, stilted sentiments, crude horror, half-veiled profligacy.

Indeed it may be affirmed of a large portion of the modern French dramas, that their plot is involved, their incidents extravagant; that the absence of sterling virtues in the hero is supplied by a corsair physiognomy, well curled mustachios, a hand-cunning at fence, knees more accustomed to genuflections in the boudoir than the oratory, a tongue apt at repartee and fluent in shallow sophistries, and, lastly, a temperament like that of Henry the Eighth, neither disposed to spare man in his anger, nor woman in his lust.

The heroine is good looking, graceful, credulous; equally accessible to flattery and terror, but so feeble is the resistance that she opposes to the ruin, or, as the French more delicately express it, the *egaremens* into which she is drawn, that, however willing we may be to make every allowance for the peculiar circumstances of her case, we cannot, after a careful investigation, decide that "her stars are more in fault than she." *L'amour physique* is the essence of the most popular French dramas of the day. Parisian delicacy has thrown a thin disguise over the naked idol. Thus the "multitia," or by a bold image of "Petrinus," the "woven wind," invested without concealing the form of the Roman "Lais," and thus "Alcina" presented herself to the enamoured Paladin:

Come Ruggiera Abbraccio rie gli cease
Il manto, e resto, il vel saltile e rado
Che non copria dinauzi nedi dietro
Pin che le rose, a i gigli un chiaro vètra.

C. VII. "ORLANDO FURIOSO."

Even the horrible is invoked to give relief and raciness to the voluptuous, and the enginery of terror is not unfrequently called in to lighten the abandon

and complete the ruin of the female "victim." Yet the constant frequenters and admirers of such representations dare to reprehend Molière on the score of coarseness and immorality. In the opinion of these critics, the immortal author of *Tartuffe* and *L'Avare* is passé, and his merits will soon be an affair of history. In the piece of Rabelais, there is some naiveté and humour, and *Monsieur Chappillard* (in which Delmas, the Mauritius Liston, enacted the principal role) is one of those irresistible extravagancies that might almost create a laugh under the ribs of death.

August 23d.—Visited Reduit, this morning, the country residence of the Governor. The edifice itself is scarcely worthy of notice. With the exception of a spacious central banquetting-room, the apartments are of ordinary dimensions, and but indifferently furnished. But the site is perfect. The rear windows of the mansion open on a lovely lawn fringed by thick belts of shrubbery, containing a choice re-union of the finest arborescent productions of the temperate and torrid zones. There the willow and the apple grow side by side with the pomgranate and banana, and the oak projects its boughs through the foliage of the cinnamon tree. The parterres in the vicinity of the house, glow with the various tints of geraniums, roses, pinks, and a hundred other classes of exotic and native flowers. About a quarter of a mile from the dwelling house, a lofty terrace of land, called *Le Bont de Monde*, abuts from the Raduit plateau into a profound valley, affording a fine cosmoramic view of the Government domain, and the interior of two romantic glens threaded by sparkling torrents, and the Plain of

Williams with its imposing corps de garde, and the loftier mountain range comprising the Pouce and Paterboth, and a margin worthy of this noble land prospect, the blue, far-stretching Indian Ocean.

August 25th.—Last night my negro groom, Othello, eloped with some equestrian paraphernalia. He is an affranchis, and I had been more than once forewarned not to enlist one of that class in my service. General rumour (and in the present instance I am not disposed to question its impartiality,) has credited the emancipated blacks with a triple stock of idleness and dishonesty. It is but a few days since my entertaining acquaintance Eveille, Mr. —'s valet, was detected by his master in a consecutive system of plunder from plate-chest, wardrobe and cellar. The guilty parties, for this clever rogue had an associate, were committed, convicted, and sentenced to a considerable term of imprisonment; but, owing to the facilities afforded for concealment by the numerous receiving houses in Port Louis, not a stiver of the stolen property has yet been or is indeed likely to be recovered. Few here would be disposed to cavil at Falstaff's assertion, "that there is nothing but roguery in villainous man." Nor, indeed, is dishonesty altogether confined to the lower class. Many large English capitals have been swamped on this island, on fictitious mortgages. The incautious, unsuspecting lenders, hugged themselves in the belief that their claims were virgin, until it appeared from the accounts of the insolvent borrower, that they were only entitled to the gleanings that might be overlooked (vain hope!) by four elder mortgagees, whose claims were antecedent to their own. Because, however, such has been

the procedure of some of the Mauritius planters, it is ungenerous to stigmatize a large body for the offences of some of its members, and to insinuate, as I have heard some Englishmen do, that the inhabitants have no compunction in exercising similar frauds, regarding them as a lawful "spoiling of the Egyptians." There is another custom not at all of infrequent occurrence, which certainly deviates from our strait notions of honesty: it is this:—when a son-in-law is about to be received into a creole family, before the marriage settlements are drawn out, a calculation on a liberal scale is formed of the aggregate expenses which the "fianceé" has incurred on her parents, commencing with the pap-bowl, and the swadding clothes, and ending with the wedding dinner and the bridal garments. We will suppose that these are estimated (the scale, as I have before observed, is a liberal one, toilet, board, education, bijouterie, medical attendance and various unspecified sundries being included) at 15,000 piastars = £3,000 : £1,000 in *bonâ fide* cash, is then made over to the bridegroom, and, this being set under the corresponding figures of the sum expended antecedent to marriage, by the very simple process of addition, the sum total appears £4,000. Adele's or Louise's dowry. The marriage settlements are then duly and legally executed, in which the husband settles on his chosen one the £4,000, which she has brought him in the shape of dowry. Considering this proceeding in the light in which certain political economists would view it, it might be affirmed, that as three thousand pounds' worth of labour were indispensable to bring the lady to hymen's mart, her current value at the period of her marriage must be at least equivalent to the cost of production, so that without any perversion of facts, she may be said to have

air-pump, worked by the identical steam engine, that regulates the blow-pipes in the butteries. The heavy moist particles of the sugar, i.e. the molasses, being then rapidly absorbed through the interstices of the net-work, the process of chrystalization in the finer portion detained in the shelves," is completed in about ten minutes. Nothing more is then required but to expose the sugar to the solar rays for two or three hours after which it is received into the vacua sack and qualified for exportation. Capt. Sanders, who, in the absence of his brother, was superintending this magnificent factory, told me that, under the new process, he would pledge himself to have the Bassin sugar (Bassin is fifteen miles from the captial) arranged on the Port Louis wharves, ready for exportation, in the same four and twenty hours that saw the canes, from which it was manufactured, in arrow in the plantation. The average period consumed in the old system of sugar-making, is from three to four weeks: Mr. Sanders thus acquires a three weeks' priority over his rivals in the sugar-market. The greater portion of the molasses is exported to Australia, the finer sugars to Europe. It is difficult to estimate the consequences of the equalization of duties on Mauritius and East India sugars on the prosperity of this valuable colony. The great, but single superiority which Hindoostan possesses over the Isle of France, is the exceedingly low price of labour in the former country, though in a partial extent this benefit will be neutralized by the introduction of labourers of the Danga caste, whose wages are, at least, a third less than those of the noirs. As a counterpoise to this preponderating advantage in favour of the sugar interests of the East Indies, I would place in the opposite scale the inferior ratio of labour requisite in the island cultivation, the canes

being planted out here quinquennially, not annually, as is the common custom in Bengal and the Dooab, and also the inexhaustible resources of this volcanic soil, combined with the absence of ruinous inundations. But *eventus stultorum magister*, will ere long decide. After a survey of the process of sugar-making, we made an excursion to the falls of the Tamarind, a superb series of ten or twelve continuous cascades, precipitated from the brim of a precipitous, wooded cliff, 900 or 1,000 feet in height. The prospect was beautiful beyond description; never was I so sensibly impressed with the sublime truism of Cowper.

“ God made the country and man made the town.”

September 6th.—Port Louis. Went this evening to a numerously attended ball given by the circle of Port Louis at Coquet's rooms. There were upwards of 600 individuals present. The saloons being crowded, and the apartments ill-ventilated, the heat was excessive. The dancing was, notwithstanding, kept up with spirit till a late hour, though there were no creole ladies who were so fearless as to hazard that most critical test to beauty, of daring the dawn. I was sensibly struck this evening, with the marked inferiority of the men in every respect to the ladies of the Mauritius. While pleasing features, symmetrical forms, easy and graceful manners, are widely diffused amongst the latter, the garçons of Port Louis, as a body, are characterized by plebeian contours, manners at once brusque and suffisans, figures apparently stunted by premature excesses, countenances of twenty, or five and twenty summers, in which one may look in vain for the *purpurlum lumen juvenæ*, the flush, the pride, the sanguine confidence, the ingenious candour of a

brought her husband £4,000 dowry. Yet there are some stolid, impracticable persons who may not politely acquiesce in the unequivocal propriety of this transaction, more especially, should they refer it for arbitration to the creditors of the generous husband. On the same principle, however, that when the Englishman, upbraided for the ministerial sacrifice of Byng, would retort on the Gaul, the judicial butchery* of the gallant Lally, may not the creole habitant, unable to negative the existence of the matrimonial trait that I have depicted, lay at mine or any other Briton's door, the scandalous but incontrovertible institution of the drapery misses, which must be familiar with all who have perused the works of the greatest and most "repandu" of modern poets? Indeed, in my opinion, the cold-blooded speculations of these ladies, is of a less amiable and more repulsive character than the fictitious dowry, and fraudulent settlement of the French planter. Though in the former case the blandishments and the tears of the mercenary beauty may win from the lover in his weakness, the princely draft which will quiet the demands of hosier, milliner, and jeweller, for two seasons of extravagance, when the treacle moon has run its giddy round, and soberer months have completed their tranquil revolutions, when the fiery ordeal of Hymen gradually brings out the imperfections before invisible on the blank surface of the lady's character, with what eyes will the dispassionate husband revert to that incident which the ardent bridegroom viewed through a false and flattering medium, and with what sentiments of disapproval and suspicion will he not regard her, who, in the

* *Vide*—Madame du Deffand's correspondence.

warm and ingenuous season of youth, scrupled not to indulge each expensive taste, and caprice, deliberately calculating on the contingent tenderness or folly of a possible husband, to relieve her from the embarrassment of debt and duns?

September 1st.—Rode over in company with two or three other English gentlemen to Bassin, the property of Mr. Sanders. After breakfast accompanied our host through the sugar works. It is the only factory in the island which is beholden to the invention of steam. I briefly describe the process as I observed it there. The canes immediately after being cut in the plantation are conveyed to the mill, where they are speedily crushed by a steam-worked wheel of gigantic proportions. Thence the extracted juice is conducted in wooden cylinders to ample vats, in which the syrop retains a turbid and discolored appearance. From these vats it is conveyed to others of corresponding dimensions, in which, by the application of a viscid clay, that attaches to itself the foreign impurities introduced with the cane-juice, it acquires the tint and transparency of sauterne. It is at this stage received into boilers, where, while in an ebullient state, the scum is ladled from the surface of the syrop. After being boiled but not concentrated in these butteries, the juice is conveyed into a spacious cool reservoir, from which, after a brief interval, it is re-conducted into a second series of boilers, where, with the assistance of blow-pipes, it undergoes the process of concentration at a lower temperature than would be otherwise available. The next receptacles for the concentrated syrop, are roomy, wooden shelves, with bottoms of fine copper net-work, which are placed in vats exposed to the action of an

suicide, it would seem, overleap the barrier of a narrow sea-sleeve, and meet with just equal powers of resistance in the gay, inconsequent, disposition of the French, as in the melancholy, calculating temperament of the English.

September 16.—Port Louis. Met this evening at dinner a Captain Ross, lately arrived from the Coco's islands. The group was taken possession of some years since by this gentleman and a Mr. Hare, who constituted themselves joint proprietors, but some difference occurring between them, Mr. Hare abdicated his moiety of the co-dominion, leaving Captain Ross monarch of all he surveyed. The Cocos are about twenty in number, and their figure, that of an oval chain, encloses a spacious and secure land-locked harbour, the entrance to which lies on the leeward quarter. The population which comprizes Europeans, Malays, Chinese, Mestizes, amounts to about an hundred and fifty. The climate, as would be inferred from the position of the islands, 12° south latitude, is exceedingly equable, the mercury seldom falling below 70° or rising above 85°. In spite of their insignificant size, their situation, directly in the track of ships bound from Australia and Van Diemen's Land to the Bay of Bengal, may ultimately raise them into importance as a watering and victualling depôt. Their products at present consist of cocoanuts, plaintains, papawas, and maize. Turtle and other varieties of esculent fish abound in the vicinity of the shore, and there is no lack of excellent poultry. Oxen, and sheep there are none, nor can I positively assert that there are pigs. Fresh water is procured on digging a few feet into the soil. Captain Ross, who is a Zetlander by birth, has transported his family, and some of his kinsfolk to

these remote islands, in which he has apparently decided to settle down for the remainder of his life. Once in two or three years he diversifies the monotony of his Cocos' sovereignty by a voyage to the Mauritius, in a vessel constructed by his subjects, under his own supervision, and procures wines, medicine, stationery, books, clothing, and other of the most indispensable necessities and conveniences of civilization. He is a somewhat eccentric, but an intelligent and well-read man, nor inattentive in his insular seclusion to the stir of busier regions, and the progress of knowledge and reform. Yet, assuredly, it could not have been in compliance with his two favourite pursuits, geology and political economy, that he was led to select for his life, the lonely region, coralline strata, and confined area of the Coco's islands.

September 17.—Lounged this morning through the market place. Though devoid of architectural attractions, and but indifferently supplied with many essential articles, it is tolerably neat, orderly, and tranquil, and has been of late a fashionable morning resort for the haut monde of Port Louis. The quarter devoted to the shell-venders seldom fails to arrest for a few minutes the idler's progress.

Next, though at a considerable interval after Ceylon and the Maldives, this island is allowed by connoisseurs the third place in the scale of conchology. The olive and harp varieties predominate; but here, as in flowers, the rarity rather than the beauty of the specimen determines its value, and it cannot be denied that the enthusiasm or fanaticism of those who, in the language of Rousseau, "bow before a tulip, and prostrate themselves before

healthful adolescence; but if the physiognomy, the expression, the manner, may be regarded as a faithful index of character. I should be tempted to apply to them the following lines from an early poem of Lord Byron's :

“ Old in the world, though scarcely broke from school,
 Damocles ran through all the maze of sin,
 And found the goal, when others just begin.”

Lastly, I cannot (and this perhaps they would feel as “the unkindest cut of all”) forbear to notice their atrocious taste in dress, as displayed on the present occasion. If, indeed, as they profess, they tread in the fashions of the mother-country, the Gallic devotees of the toilet, have substantial cause for mourning their vanished national supremacy in these matters, and casting a longing, lingering look behind at those days, when the elegant, witty, heartless Count Grammont, by a rare combination, the most successful of sharpers, and the most fortunate of suitors, was the acknowledged *arbiter elegantiarum* of his day, the profound interpreter of perukes and points, bands and ruffles, to the Sir Fopling Flutter of Charles’ frivolous court. These gentlemen’s coats, which exhibited a nearly equal area of cloth and velvet, were traversed by files of massive gilt-buttons; and their vests of the most glaring and contrasted hues, now lilies on a crimson, now peonies on an orange-bed, rejoiced under a glittering profusion of meretricious bijouterie. I must not omit to mention that there were several persons present at this assembly, who were neither qualified by their birth, or vocations, to mingle with the better portion of the Port Louis society, in the square of the contre danse or the circle of the waltz, subordinate clerks, shopkeepers, and their families.

Indeed it must be admitted that the conventional distinctions, respected in other countries, promise to be speedily confused and irradiated by the mattock and pickaxe of the pioneer Egalite, though the creole prejudices against the faintest tinge of Asiatic or African blood, are maintained in all their pristine inflexibility. It was only the other day that a country neighbour of mine, a French creole of respectable birth, but narrow circumstances, received a note from a blacksmith, whom he had employed to repair the lock of a fowling piece. It commenced thus. "Monsieur! Monsieur! The beauty of the evening par preference, was a Miss Valentine Keating, creole by birth, Irish by extraction, only sixteen, but in the precocious maturity of insular beauty. Her tall, commanding figure, and the animated, but imperious character of her chiselled features, would have harmonized better with the diadem of Juno or the crescent frontlet of Diana than the Cestus of the laughter-loving queen. The Pallas or Bellona costume (which Lely has appropriated to the too famous Dutchess of Cleveland, and which, in the haughty and half-relentless expression of the countenance, and the cinctured decorum of the garb, finely contrasts with the sleepy voluptuous air, and robes loosely flowing, hair as free that characterize most of the lovely apologies of that Asiatic court,) would have beseemed in every respect the young, fair, superb Mauricienne. She is fiancé, I hear, to a French Count of Bourbon, who has never yet seen the original, but whose imagination was ignited by the sight of her portrait, and he, in consequence, made proposals, not to the lady herself, but to her parents. It seems they have accepted his addresses and are on the eve of conveying their beautiful daughter to Bourbon." Marriages de convenance, and

a hyacinth," is, at least, equalled by that of some shell-collectors.

While a pair of single harps are procurable for a rupee, fifteen dollars is not unfrequently given for a double harp, which, to an uninitiated eye, exhibits no intrinsic superiority over the former class. The Mauritius corals are unequalled in variety of configuration, richness of pattern, (if I may so express myself) and vividness of tints, snow-white, rose, deep-crimson, and sapphire-blue. I have as yet seen no relics of the extinct dodo genus (peculiar I believe to this island and Bourbon) either in skeleton or fossil. They are to be found, of course, in the collections of the French Savans, and, I have been informed, whether accurately or not, that there is a specimen in the collection of the Asiatic Society of Calcutta. It is far from singular that a bird (such as the dodo is described to have been) of unwieldy form, and passive, lethargic disposition, should, in detail, have presented no resistance to its slaughterers; but so rare an exception to the self-conservative principle, diffused through animated nature as the utter destruction of a species, may not unprofitably arrest the attention, and the irrevocable dissolution of this web-footed class, amidst the individual cessation but generic continuance of the countless families of earth, air, and water, may suggest a more healthful sentiment than that of vague curiosity. The reflection that a genus, (to the philosophic eye it matters not whether the mammoth or the beetle) that once existed, exists no more, involuntarily forces on one the uncertainty, mutability, and final extinction of our present visible system, with its seemingly eternal fitness of creatures, grades, distinctions, and principles, with its immoveable stars, its revolving

planets, and obedient though eccentric comets, with the consecutive harmony of its varying seasons, and the durable and monotonous aspect of terrestrial existence, in which the decay of the unit is merged and lost sight of in the permanent vitality of the mass. The annihilation of the merest atom in created space, inspires the contemplative mind with a blended sentiment of awe and sympathy. It is thus that when

Stars unnumbered gild the glowing pole,

we gaze wistfully and pensively on the tiny blank in the blue cope of heaven, where erst shone amidst her stellar sisterhood,

The lost Pleiad seen on earth no more,

and that the memory of this perished species is invested with an interest, which the contemplation of the most wonderful and beautiful of the existing families of animated nature fails to impart. He at least who has imbibed, however partially, the all-embracing, all-sympathizing benevolence of La Fontaine (that enchanter who has endowed with souls and intellects, aye, and with appropriate feelings, and sentiments, and prejudices, the various tribes of the four-footed and feathered creations) he, who has owned a contagious pity, while perusing Burns's pathetic address to the poor field mouse, whose happy home had been dismantled by the ruthless plough-share, will revert with a thoughtful regret to the memory of the perished dodo.

September 25th.—Rode over to Mahelburgh from the Plain of Williams, the distance five and twenty miles, the road an excellent one, traverses the Curepipe forest at the auberge of which the Port Louis diligence

changes horses. The grand port district in which Mahebourg is situated is rich and highly cultivated. Exposed to the cool southerly breezes, this little seaport bears a high character for salubrity, and the surrounding scenery is strikingly picturesque ; yet I must confess that the reality fell short of my anticipations. It may be that the pre-eminent grandeur and beauty of the St. Pierre and Savanne landscapes, may have impaired the influence of Mahebourg's more subdued charms, and rendered me fastidious, if not blazé on these matters. A necessary engagement in Port Louis prevented me from visiting the Souffleur. This natural curiosity, which is about eight miles distant from Mahebourg, is a cavernous mass of basalt projecting from the sea-shore, into the interior of which the waves are sucked with no ordinary force, and thence through a chimney or aperture in the ceiling of the hollow rock, jetted a considerable height into the air. Its nomenclature has been suggested by its resemblance to the faineant monarch of the deep, exhibiting the superior portion of its vast bulk above the surface of the weltering waves, and spouting the brine through its nostrils in uncouth recreation.

October 5th.—Engaged a cabin this morning on board the *Woodlark*, bound for the Cape of Good Hope : paid a few farewell visits to my neighbours in the Plain of Williams. Now that I am about to quit the Mauritius, probably for ever ; I should be wanting to myself did I not endeavour to place the creole character in a fair point of view, and release it from, at least, unmerited obloquy. I am not prepared to deny that the French creoles have supplied some conspicuous instances of contempt of principle in their pecuniary relations, and that, amongst the

fair sex, there are some, as in all countries, who

" Do let heaven see the pranks
They dare not show their husbands ;"

but it is equally illogical and uncharitable on the strength of some individual instances, to blend the whole race in one sweeping sentence of reprobation. I have not disguised the political feuds and national jealousies, which of late have obtruded into the walks of social intercourse. I have drawn a marked line of distinction between the better class of habitants, and the avocats and negocians of Port Louis. I have also expressed my candid opinion of the decided superiority in every respect of the daughters over the sons of Cerne. I now add, that I have no where experienced more genuine kindness and hospitality than at the houses of the creole planters ; that I have generally found them at once polite and frank in their manners, amiable, sensible, and liberal, and, occasionally, of highly cultivated minds, and imbued with the loftiest principles of honour. Amongst my fair acquaintances were a few, whom, in natural graces of manner, conversational vivacity, delicate powers of discrimination, amiability, and sincerity of disposition, I have never seen surpassed.

These instances are, of course, few and far between, but the young Mauricienne may be generally qualified as good humoured, lively, intelligent, of easy, natural manners, equally remote from the extremes of precision and coquetry. She possesses almost invariably an aptitude for dancing, and correct taste in music, both which accomplishments she sedulously cultivates. It must, however, be admitted, that these pursuits exact a disproportionate attention and consideration at the

expense of the more intellectual departments of education. I have sometimes thought that the mothers of these young ladies had perused in too literal and serious a mood, and laid too deeply to heart that witty dialogue between the dancing master and the music master in the *Bourgeois gentilhomme*, in which all other sciences, books, arts, and academes, are merged in these two master accomplishments :

Le Maître de musique.

Il n'y a rien qui soit si utile dans un état que la musique.

Le Maître à danser.

Il n'y a rien qui soit si nécessaire aux hommes que la danse.

Le Maître de musique.

Sans la musique un état ne peut subsister.

Le Maître à danser.

Sans la danse un homme ne sauroit rien faire.

Le Maître de musique.

Tous les désordres toutes les guerres qu'on voit dans le monde,
n'arrivent.

Le Maître à danser.

Que arc q'on apprend pas la musique.

Tous les malheurs des hommes, tous les revers funestes, don les histories tout remplies, les bevue des politiques les manque meus des grands capitaines tout cela n'est venu que faute de savoir danser.

&c. &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. &c.

I need scarcely add, that the region of alogies and ologies it still to them a terra incognita, and the site of Blue Stocking Hall as apocryphal as that of Mil-dendo the capital of Liliput. Their frequent use of ejaculations, mon Dieu ! Diable ! &c. (setting religion apart) somewhat clashes with our notions of feminine propriety, though innocent, if compared with the energetic and graphic oaths which our good Queen Bess appropriated (her sycophants would have said by

a right divine) and with which in later times Charles' maids of honour sprinkled their racy conversation. The general validity of the claim put forth by the English to a sturdier integrity amongst men, and more impregnable virtue amongst women, I am not prepared to dispute. There is a flexibility, an inconsistency, a faiblesse in the French character which renders them more obnoxious to temptation, than their more constant, and uncomplying neighbours. The prevailing laxness of religious opinions, too, amongst the Gauls of to-day, cannot assuredly be corroborative of man's honesty, or woman's chastity.

The decidedly professed infidels are not numerous, though one is occasionally edified by hearing some shallow bavard parrotting the trite objections against revelation which he has drawn from the shelves of the encyclopedists. On the majority their religion sits loosely like an easy glove. At the same time the Roman Catholic Bishop is treated with much consideration, and even empressment by his flock; and the spacious chapel of Port Louis, particularly on the fête de Dieu and other holidays, is thronged to excess, and, on those occasions, there is an appearance of decorous attention; if not of earnest devotion.

It may be reasonably conjectured, that the gregarious instinct, and national love of spectacle, have their share in collecting so many well-dressed hundreds to listen to prayers, droned out in an unknown tongue, and the voices of disciplined choristers, and to feed their eyes with pictures, lighted-tapers, incense tossing, scarlet and lace.

Lastly, the very genius of the French language, in its nuancées epithets, and qualifying gradations,

disarms vice of half its grossness and deformity. The courtesan is neutralized into the *entretienne*, the adulteress is softened into the *chère amie*. Does a more than equivocal spot rest on a French lady's reputation? Il faut avouer (a fair acquaintance will say to you with a deprecating sigh) que Madame — a été en sa jeunesse un peu gaie. Who is the man pre-eminently de bonnes fortunes? Is it the general, who has triumphed over his country's foes? The successful patriot, who has not merged in the demagogue? The minister who uncursed by his fellow-subjects, sleeps with his fathers? Is it the fortunate, high-minded merchant, against whose well-won, honourable opulence no widow's groans or orphan's tears have appealed in eloquent protest to the chancery of heaven, who, superior to circumstance, and temptation, and firm amidst the losses, and derelictions of cotemporary thousands, among the faithless faithful, has maintained a reputation unsullied by the suspicion of fraud, or the slightest taint of exaction! Is it the rarer example of a genuine philanthropist, that blameless voluptuary in the luxury of doing good, the man of Ross, who showered blessings on neighbouring thousands, and made his native district blossom like the rose, the glorious Howard, that ardent-self-sacrificing pilgrim of charity, who (to borrow the eloquent language of Burke,) visited all Europe to dive into the depths of dungeons, to plunge into the infection of hospitals, to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain, to take the gauge and dimensions of misery, depression, and contempt, to remember the forgotten, to attend to the neglected, to visit the forsaken and to compare and collate the distresses of all men in all countries to whose lovely Crimean grave have been wafted for consecutive years the eulogies of the prosperous, the

passionate wail of the unfortunate, the blended admiration and regret, of a mourning continent. It is none of these. Who then? The deliberate, heartless, blazé seducer; he who insolently arrogates a fee simple over woman's charms, whether enclosed by the plebeian boddice or patrician stomacher; he who, with a perverted knight's-errantry, professes to release poor distressed ladies, not from the giant's or enchanter's duresse, but the more intolerable restraint of despotic opinion. He, who before-skilled to take advantage of each momentary weakness, and, with a fiend-like dexterity, to wake the loosest wishes in the chastest heart, in his inmost soul curses the glittering and dangerous reputation that he has acquired, yet, impelled at once by habit, and by vanity, perseveres in his *benevolent* career, though the flush, and the novelty, and the adventitious illusion exist no longer, and outraged conscience reasserts her rights, the wanton desecrator of purity, the jaded drudge of pleasure. Still admitting that the standard of moral principle amongst the French of the colonies and the continent is none of the severest, it would be injustice, were I not to assert, that there are many honourable, high principled gentlemen amongst the planters of the Isle of France, and that a large proportion of the creole ladies are attached wives and fond mothers.

I have no intention to disguise the unfavourable traits of a sejour in the Mauritius. I grant that the unneat and slovenly accommodation of the Port Louis hotels is far from attractive; that there is ample scope for annoyance in the insolent negligence, and shameless exactions of the shop-keepers; that the indigenuous servants are capable of exhausting the aggregate of human patience, posterior to the days of Job; that good taste is outraged by the blustering suffisance, and

unlettered flippancy of the majority of the *jeunes gens* of the capital; that the social will be chilled by the present hollow and restricted intercourse in the better circles; that the modest will shrink from the undisguised, and connived at immorality pervading all grades; and, lastly, that the negroes with their vices, and their crimes, and their amphibious liberty, constitute a very salient and repulsive feature in the general prospect: yet, in spite of all these admissions, I should not cherish a very favourable opinion of that person, who had journeyed through the highways and by ways of this charming island, and, sharing the cordial welcome of the creole planter, had sat at the board where rosy wine and sparkling gl^{asses}, and musical accents, blended their influences, who could hear, in after years, the "Mauritius" named without its conjuring up some sunny spot in the waste of memory. For myself, its mere name will be intertwined with a thousand scenes of various beauty, rather assimilated in fancy to glimpses of Eden or the fabled Hesperides, than aught existent and terrestrial; nor will there be wanting a living group to impart an added and individual interest to those Elysian prospects, whose eyes of brightness, whose voices of gladness, whose bland manners, whose playful intelligence, whose amiable affections, whose sincerity, rectitude, and benevolence, might redeem that region from more than its present burthen of iniquity, and disarm the aspirations which, in a fervid earnestness, though questionable charity, I have heard breathed by more than one of my countrymen for some signal visitation by flood or fire on this beautiful island, a retributive punishment for the wickedness ● those who dwell therein.

ON VISITING, FOR THE LAST TIME, A BEAUTIFUL
SCENE IN THE MAURITIUS.

I.

Bold mountain, o'er whose sombre head
"Aurora's" gayest tints are thrown ;
Glen, from whose deep and sunless bed
The cataract peals in solemn tone ;
Dark, many-foliaged groves, that rise
Round the free-planter's generous home ;
Ripe, waving crops, whose wealth outvies
Peru's or Afric's golden loam.

II

Scarped, aloof-crested cliffs, whose base
The matted, lithe Lianas hide,
Transcending in their drooping grace
Imperial eagles' arched pride :
Transparent sky in whose blue cove,
One lonely, snowy speck appears,
Where, poised five hundred feet above,
The white bird of the tropics steers.

III.

And thou, all girding, halcyon sea,
That twinest round yon coral strand,
Soft as the pulse of infancy
Responding to a mother's hand :
Enchanting, loved, familiar scene,
More than my ardent vision knew,
When first it hailed thy beauteous mien,
Invests thy present parting view.

IV.

Adieu, adieu, to-morrow's breeze
 May waft me from thy fairy shore ;
 To-morrow's sun-set flush the seas
 That mirror thy sweet traits no more.
 If from a common, hackneyed site,
 Linger, reluctant, sad we part,
 When torn from haunts that thrill delight,
 What tenfold sorrow sweeps the heart !

V.

Had I not hung in childhood's hour
 Absorbed o'er meek Virginia's woes,
 And still, while sobs revealed the power,
 Of infant pity's first felt throes ?
 Had I not yearned to tread the soil,
 Of golden cane and spicy wood,
 To see the palm-trees tufted spoil,
 And win the turtle's callow brood ?

VI.

And when to riper age was given,
 Feelings developed and defined ;
 And one by one were crushed and riven,
 The aspirings of a cruder mind ;
 One fostered wish of early years,
 To palpable distinctness grew,
 Watered by love's congenial tears,
 And died in hope's ensanguined hue.

VII.

At length the Elysian shore I sought,
 Endeared to fancy's ancient claim,
Though in my soul a change had wrought,
 And health eschewed my languid frame
And disappointment's iron sleet
 Had marred anticipation's bower ;
While exiled years with leaden feet
 Had stained affection's limpid flower.

VIII.

Arrived, I gaze, with wonder hail,
 A thousand varied, blending charms,
The blandishments of laughing vale,
 The mountain torrent's wild alarms ;
Till, to my bosom's inmost fold,
 The beautiful's triumphant sense,
Sheds, like a sun-beam uncontrolled,
 It's kindling, vital, influence.

IX.

Oh ! for a master's living lyre
 Th' emotions of my breast to free,
To effuse on the impassioned wire
 My spirit's boundless extacy ;
For never to a lovelier land
 Hath minstrel poured his deathless lay.
From Tempe's vale, or Scio's strand
 By Garda's lake, or Naples' bay.

X.

Enchanting isle, in after years,
Some rival of St. Pierre may rise,
To hymn thy bland, Ægean clime,
Thy love-smit daughters' faithful sighs ;
Enough for me, if memory's sheet
Thy charming aspect still retain,
Bid rapture's pulse more proudly beat,
And soothe the dreary hours of pain.

XI.

Then, when 'neath India's peepul-trees,
I list the hot wind's sullen moan,
I'll think me on the cool blue seas
That lave Mauritius' emerald zone ;
And while that arid shore beside
Old Gungah's tawny currents creep,
Away on fancy's wings I'll ride,
Where Chamarelle's flashing waters leap.

XII.

And when the long-abandoned seat,
I claim in that far English home,
'And loving eyes and voices greet,
The exile from the ocean foam,
I'll not forget the welcome warm,
Sweet Cerne, in thy planters' shades ;
The native grace, the social charm
That long shall mark the Creole maids.

